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DEVALUATION AND DEFENCE

MR. CHURCHILL has clearly decided that the Tory electoral campaign, like that of 1945, will be a one-man show. Although his own party, before September 18, had pressed for devaluation, he painted a picture of catastrophic defeat and put himself forward as the one man able to restore national and international confidence.

These personal and party manœuvres hardly left time for serious discussion of the state of the nation, although the Chancellor left no doubt of its extreme gravity. Can this devaluation prove an exception to the rule in all previous devaluations that the initial advantages in export markets are gradually but inexorably cancelled out by rising home costs?

By increasing the rate of tax on distributed profits, the Chancellor rightly made a concession to the feelings of organised Labour. It is a paradox of the situation that a Socialist Government urgently needs profiteering by our manufacturers in the dollar markets; but must be equally careful to prevent these dollar profits from increasing the sterling incomes of the business men who earn them. The increased tax will do a little towards achieving this purpose. On the issue of the cost of living, however, Sir Stafford stubbornly refused to admit the likelihood of the sharp increase which nearly every expert believes must occur within the next ten months. No doubt he is unwilling to provide a justification from the Treasury for price increases which might well be a concealed form of profiteering, and he is also unwilling to strengthen the extremely powerful case of the poorest, in particular the old-age pensioners, for supplementary allowances.

Here we come to the crux of the Chancellor's problem. By any principle of social justice, though basic rates of Government payments cannot be increased, supplementary allowances to those in need should be granted by the National Assistance Board sufficient to counteract the effect of devaluation on the cost of living. But the Chancellor made it clear that in his view the limit of Government expenditure has been reached: the capital investment programme will have to be pruned and economies enforced throughout Whitehall. In his view, the pensioners must share the sacrifices involved in devaluation along with the rest of the community.

This argument might be sustained if it were not for the fact that one large supplementary estimate will be submitted to Parliament when it reassembles in October. Having allocated £767,000,000 for Defence last April, the Government will actually have spent something like £800,000,000 this year. This particular supplementary estimate, of course, is due to the decision to maintain 25,000 men in Hong Kong. But, in addition, the bill for our rearmament, begun in 1948, has been slowly mounting this year and will mount still further in 1950.

Labour Members during the debate found it easy enough to heckle Mr. Eccles and those of his colleagues who called for large-scale retrenchment but would not specify how the money could be saved. These Labour M.P.s should realise, however, that even the modest retrenchment envisaged by Sir Stafford is bound to fall either on social services or home consumption, if he continues to maintain his blank opposition to cuts in the defence estimates. Money spent on defence is in any case inflationary and therefore even more dangerous at a time when goods are once again being removed from the home market. Moreover, devaluation has still further increased the cost of our overseas commitments. Finally, as almost every military expert now recognises, conscription has proved to be not only wasteful of man-power but enormously costly. Since each conscript costs £400 a year, it would be far cheaper to send them all to Eton and Oxford. In the course of the debate, Mr. Mikardo observed that the Chiefs of Staff should not be absolved from the policy of equal sacrifice. The Government has imposed a cut on home consumption and capital investment. It has set a limit to food subsidies and firmly stated that we can afford no further social services. Surely it is time to set a ceiling on Service expenditure too—£650,000,000 might be a reasonable figure for 1950. If the Chiefs of Staffs reply that, with this ceiling, they cannot cover all our commitments under Mr. Bevin's foreign policy, then those commitments should be reviewed, along with all the domestic commitments of a Socialist Government.

Unions and Wages

The Trade Unions naturally wish to know where they stand in face of devaluation. It is evident that there is no room for large all-round wage-advances; yet, if the T.U.C. leaders are to carry on with the policy of "restraint," they must, in view of the certainty of some immediate rise in the cost of living and of some further rise in the near future, be in a position to offer their members all possible reassurances. The case for limited advances to the worst-paid groups in a number of industries, which was strong before devaluation, is now much stronger, and cannot be resisted. But it will have to be linked wherever possible with plans to give the more skilled workers a better return strictly conditional on higher output. Unless this is done, there is a danger of the margin between skilled and unskilled wages being so reduced as to provoke an explosion among the skilled men. There is a stronger case than ever for some form of general minimum wage. Most of the Unions have been against this in the past; but it may have become a necessary safeguard now, especially in view of

the great obstacles to raising the lower grades by the normal methods of collective bargaining industry by industry. The enactment of a statutory minimum, leaving the amount to be varied from time to time by some sort of General Wages Board, could be used to solve the problem of the lower-paid grades; and the more difficult problem of differentials for skilled work could then be tackled, in relation to output, by the normal bargaining agencies.

Effects of Devaluation

Most countries except Argentina have now shown their hands in relation to the new currency situation created by the fall in sterling. The Canadian readjustment, by ten per cent, of the value of Canadian in terms of U.S. dollars will ease the British position in terms of wheat purchases, but will of course give that much less advantage to British sellers in the Canadian market. The case of Argentina is a good deal more complicated because of uncertainty about the terms of the current agreement between that country and Great Britain. The Argentine Government seems to be claiming that the sterling prices fixed under the agreement ought, in one way or another, to be written up to compensate for the reduction in the gold and dollar value of the pound, whereas the agreement appears to fix the sterling price unequivocally and to provide a gold guarantee only in respect of any sterling balance outstanding in favour of Argentina at the end of the period for which the deal runs. The terms, however, have not been published in full, and it is presumably on account of this uncertainty that the future value of the *peso* has not yet been fixed. For the rest, the Belgian devaluation will mean keener competition with our exporters in the American market. On films, the fixed dollar sum the Americans are allowed to take out of this country will, of course, cost more in sterling; but lower production costs here, measured in dollars, may encourage the use of American capital—especially blocked sterling—for making films in Great Britain. How the earnings of British shipping will be affected by devaluation it is still too soon to say.

"Free" Tin and the Dollar

The announced new prices for various metals and the official statement that the London Metal Market is to be reopened next month for dealings in tin are direct consequences of the Washington discussions and of the devaluation of sterling. In the case of tin, the interim sterling price, which is to be in force until free dealings are resumed, is considerably lower than it would have been had the intention been to maintain the dollar price unchanged. This would have been difficult, as tin is no longer in short supply, and the result might have been underselling by the competitors of Malaya. Besides, the Americans probably insisted on a lower dollar price as a condition of increasing their stock-piling purchases; and they may have insisted also on a return to free market operations. It does not appear that bulk-purchase of other base metals is to be given up, at any rate for the present; but what has happened in the case of tin illustrates the power of the United States to insist on its own conditions in respect of trading methods, where it is the principal purchaser of a commodity which it does not produce at home. Of course, the higher sterling prices for tin and other base metals will react on British manufacturing costs: thus, it is not only the materials for which we have to pay in dollars, but also some of those which we buy as well as sell in sterling that will in future cost us more. Malaya—and the owners of Malayan investments—will be the gainers, together with other sterling area producers of primary products marketable in the dollar countries.

Indonesians at The Hague

The emphasis in this, the fifth week of the Indonesian Conference at The Hague, has switched from the Committee on Political and Constitutional Affairs to the Committee which deals with the economic and financial complexities involved in the transfer of power. One of the most important factors at this Conference has been the unity of the Republican and Federalist Delegations achieved by the Indonesians. They submitted joint Memoranda to the Political Committee, which has now agreed on the character of the Union Statute, on the position and function of the Head of the Union and on the duties and composition of the Conferences of Ministers of the Union partners and of the Courts of Arbitration. This week they are equally agreed on such problems as the payment of debts to which the Dutch want the Republic to agree. The Republicans and the Federalists are willing to assume debts contracted up to the time of the Dutch surrender on March 3rd, 1942. But after that time they reserve the right to investigate and to decide what debts were incurred for the interest of the Indonesian people, and in no circumstances will they take over the debts involved in two Dutch military actions. On other matters—trade, monetary relations and concessions—Republicans and Federalists are also agreed, and their front will not be broken by Dutch hints that American help may not be forthcoming if the Indonesians fail to consider Dutch terms. But the ultimate success of the Conference depends on the cultivators of the Archipelago. They are already showing signs of impatience, which may even lead to the recall of Dr. Hatta in the middle of October, if no agreement is reached. Indonesian impatience is also reflected in the visit of Mr. Palar from Lake Success; he is to be briefed for Uno in case the Indonesians decide to transfer discussion from The Hague to the Uno Assembly. Do the Dutch not understand that delaying tactics can only play into the hands of impatient nationalists?

Peiping and New York

Mr. Tsiang's speech at Lake Success amounted to nothing more than an appeal to the United Nations to fight for the remnants of the Soong Dynasty. All that is left to them—except their vast fortunes shrewdly distributed by Madame Chiang Kai-shek and the Kung family domiciled in New York—is their belief that they can exploit the fear of Communism. Meanwhile, in Peiping, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference is planning the organisational structure of the new regime and electing a Government Council of the Central People's Government. They will select a national flag, a national insignia and a modern calendar. Mao Tse-tung, blaming China's backwardness on imperialism abroad and reaction at home, told the Conference that China would "emerge in the world as a highly civilised nation." The Government now forming in Peiping can speak for the greater part of China. Last week the Province of Sinkiang formally supported the new regime, whilst the Chinese Moslems, in whom Chiang Kai-shek and his clique placed their confidence, collapse without any resistance to the Communist armies. This leaves only the South and the South-West not yet under Communist rule, though there is no reason to believe that the peasants and soldiers will fight for the old regime. Will the United Nations face the fact that the Chinese delegates at Lake Success represent no one but themselves? The Members of the United Nations now no longer have the excuse of legal problems of recognition; there is a Central Government which can speak for China; it is this Government to which recognition should be accorded as quickly as possible. A delegation from Peiping would bring a breath of fresh air into the proceedings.

Strike Threat in France

The French Government is now facing, for the first time in more than two years, the threat of strike action by a united trade union movement. Claims for a general rise in wages and for a return to collective bargaining have no longer only the backing of the Communist C.G.T.; the Socialist splinter organisation, *Force Ouvrière*, and the older-established Christian trade union movement, the C.F.T.C., have now decided that they will support these claims against the Government. It is some measure of the distance towards the Right which the French Administration has travelled since December, 1947, that *Force Ouvrière*, formed in that month to fight Communism in the unions, should have now swung into line with the C.G.T. In fact, *Force Ouvrière* has never had much of a chance. It was embarrassed from the very first by having to support a Government which combined the fighting of Communism with the maintenance of low wages during an inflationary period. So long as the Socialists and the progressive trends in the M.R.P. retained a more than nominal influence upon the Government, however, both *Force Ouvrière* and the C.F.T.C. could hope to hold and perhaps increase their membership at the expense of the Communists. Now that the Government of M. Queuille, under its moderate label, has become a straightforward Conservative administration wedded to "free enterprise," high profits, and low wages, the non-Communist unions are confronted with a choice of losing what membership they have or of working with the Communists against a Government in which their own men are still Ministers. Not without misgivings, they are finding themselves forced to choose the second course. Against a background latent with the possibilities of every sort of unofficial strike, M. Bouzanquet, the secretary of *Force Ouvrière*, has warned the Government that there would be "insurrectionary strikes within a month" unless wages were raised, and that his organisation would work with the Communists to make such strikes, if they had to come, successful.

A Greek-Yugoslav Alliance?

There is no doubt that Mr. Tsaldaris, the Greek Foreign Minister, was right for once in a way when he told the General Assembly this week that the Balkan problem had entered a new stage. But the reason he gave was not the right one. His reason for thinking this was "the almost complete elimination of the guerilla bands in Greece," a claim which, however quiescent the guerillas may be for the present, remains to be substantiated by events. The fate of the guerilla movement in Greece is in any case no longer the dominant factor in South-Eastern Europe. Much more important is the fate of Yugoslavia—or that of Albania. The Yugoslavs have now abandoned their formal support of the Soviet view. Mr. Kardelj, the Yugoslav Foreign Minister, spoke passionately in the General Assembly against the "hegemonist tendencies" of the Soviet Union, and was loudly applauded by most Western delegates. In fact, Yugoslavia has now been backed by the West against the Czechs for a seat on the

Security Council. Having tried for a time to occupy a middle position, that is, the Yugoslavs have found that they must go much farther towards the West if they are to stand their ground. Very much may turn, and perhaps the choice between peace and war, upon the distance they decide to go. It was clear from Tsaldaris's speech that the Greek Government is hoping for an alliance with Yugoslavia on the basis of mutual hostility to the Communist countries, and above all to Albania. That talks to this end may be going on quietly between Belgrade and Athens is suggested by such small pieces of information as the re-opening of communications, announced last week, between Salonica and Skoplje. The Western Powers might be seeking to promote a Greek-Yugoslav alliance, since this would bring within reach a reasonable chance of changing the Communist regime in Albania and of installing, perhaps, the tribal chieftains such as Abas Kupi who were ejected in 1945. But an attempt to line up Marshal Tito's Yugoslavia, monarchist Greece, and a "changed" Albania, contains one large element of risk. The political strains of such an open abandonment of the Communist front might prove too great for Marshal Tito. Washington is faced with the nice calculation of balancing the possible gain of Albania against the possible loss of Yugoslavia.

New York Politics

This November, New Yorkers face two close and complicated contests, for the Senate and for Mayor of New York City. The rival candidates for the Senate seat left vacant by Senator Wagner's retirement are John Foster Dulles, who was nominated by his close friend Governor Dewey to fill the vacancy temporarily, and former Governor Lehman, the best vote-getter the Democratic Party has had in the State. The question of Federal aid to Catholic schools, which provoked the controversy between Mrs. Roosevelt and Cardinal Spellman, is playing its part in this election. Mr. Lehman, who must pick up votes in New York City to offset the Republican majorities up-State, has declared in favour of aiding parochial schools, for a great many of the Democratic voters are Catholics. Mr. Dulles is against using any Federal funds for education. But the issue is not quite so simple. Mr. Lehman is also running as the candidate for the Liberal Party and, in the mayoralty elections, the Liberal candidate, Mr. Newbold Morris, who has Republican endorsement, strongly opposes aid to Catholic schools. Mayor O'Dwyer, the Democrat who is seeking re-election, takes the same line as Mr. Lehman. Thus a voter who marks a Liberal ticket supports Mr. Lehman for Senator, and Mr. Morris, Liberal-Republican, for Mayor. Or the voter can have Mr. Lehman and Mayor O'Dwyer on the Democratic line. Or, finally, he can vote Republican and have Senator Dulles and Mr. Morris. Such confusions are the result of New York election law, which permits a candidate to run on two separate tickets. The American Labour Party, once worth half-a-million votes and formerly the affiliate of the Democratic Party in such elections, has nominated the Left-wing Representative Marcantonio for Mayor. But the A.L.P., the New York section of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party, has recently been split. One of its leading members, City Councillor Eugene Connolly, has challenged Marcantonio's domination of the A.L.P. machine. Though the Connolly faction was badly beaten in the primary, its appearance was a protest against Marcantonio's faithful and politically disastrous support for the Communist line. There will be many confused voters in New York on polling day.

PARLIAMENT: The Last Lap

Wednesday.

Not till the Chancellor, in a dramatic passage, drew attention to the millions upon millions of American babes ("the infant kind," as Pritt specified) waiting for British salesmen, did Members feel that there was something new in our economic affairs. Instead of the familiar "I smoke Camels," or "I drink Red Roses always," to-morrow's full-page New York advertisement took shape in their imagination—a little child looking straight at the camera with the proud comment, "I always wear *British* diapers." But will that solve the dollar crisis?

A fortnight of exposition by the professional economists had already made Members aware with incontrovertible certainty that there was a lot to be said for devaluation and a lot against it; and that while, on the one hand, it might solve the country's economic difficulties, it was quite possible, on the other hand, that it might increase them. Reinforced by these assurances, many who had spent part of their vacation in explaining to their constituents why devaluation was a bad thing, were quite clear when the House reassembled that devaluation was now a good thing. Their faith in Sir Stafford Cripps' judgment found its reasons during his speech. For, as the Chancellor explained, the merit of devaluation is not an absolute. To devalue, for example, on a "seller's market" would be absurd: to devalue on a "buyer's market" may be the wisest possible tactic.

No one in the crowded Chamber interrupted the Chancellor; everyone was eager to understand the stages of his conversion. Only at one point was there a hearty laugh from the Tories. Sir Stafford Cripps had mentioned "full employment." He paused in his speech, and said coldly that the question of full employment was no laughing matter for the working-class. The Tories stopped in mid-guffaw.

Their dilemma about devaluation was as considerable as that of many Labour Members. Since the Labour Party was embarrassed by the Chancellor's about-turn, the Tories wanted to embarrass it still further. But the Tories themselves, though they speak with many voices, had gone on record through their representatives as partisans of devaluation. They resolved their problem by the familiar technique of firm hypocrisy.

Oliver Stanley, following Cripps, had the righteousness of a leader of a party which had never stooped to policies of monetary manipulation. Eccles, who wound up, had forgotten his Strasbourg fervour for devaluation, and could only tut-tut that Labour was now prepared to use an instrument which he himself (for the wrong reasons and at the wrong time) had advocated.

Enmity towards the Government made unfamiliar allies. While Pritt was attacking the Chancellor's policy, Tory heads were nodding up and down in a monotonous cadence. But when the Tory Osborne began to congratulate him, Pritt dashed out of the Chamber. There were, he indicated, limits to what one has to put up with from the Tories. Osborne followed him with a splash of vituperation. Pritt didn't listen. He was by this time in the Peer's Gallery in cordial conversation with an aged Tory lawyer who once said that he "didn't like to be seen talking to politicians."

Apart from these and similar contradictions, the debate raised serious questions which at the end of the first day were still unanswered. Indeed no one but a crystal gazer could answer them with certainty. Will the Americans lower their tariffs? Or if we succeed in raising our exports to them by 30 per cent or 40 per cent will they raise their tariffs? From the Tories, the only concrete suggestion for tackling the crisis came from Spearman, who wanted a cut of £250 million in Government expenditure.

When Shackleton said that Spearman wanted to cut the social services, Stanley hastily defended him. Oh, no, not that. Yet everyone knows that the public expenditure which the Tories want to cut is on social services. Even as the suggestion bubbles to the lips of the Tory back-benchers, the Tory front-bench seals them. Perhaps, after the General Election. . . ! The Tories prefer to reveal their policy after an election not before.

MAURICE EDELMAN

ATOMIC PEACE

What difference does it make that an atom bomb should have exploded in the U.S.S.R. earlier than the experts expected? It rules out once and for all foolish talk of "preventive war." The notion that a third world war could be stopped by dropping atom bombs on Russia has been freely discussed, but quickly dismissed in all responsible quarters. A few minutes' reflection showed that the inevitable result of atom bombing Russia would be to spread the Red Army over Europe and, in short, to start both world war and world revolution.

A second effect of the explosion in Russia is that most people hold that a further effort should now be made to reach an agreement about control of atomic weapons. Let us recall why earlier attempts broke down. Deadlock was the result of basic considerations of security both in America and Russia. America insisted that Russia must accept full inspection before she agreed to destroy her atomic power, while Russia proposed two simultaneous conventions, one prohibiting the use of atomic weapons and ordering the destruction of existing stockpiles and the other setting up control over atomic energy. It seems, however, improbable that Russia ever believed that America would in fact destroy her atomic bombs if she agreed to inspection or that the Western States had any confidence that the U.S.S.R. would ever accept methods of inspection satisfactory to the other Great Powers.

Russia had good reasons for being more careful than other countries about inspection. Her chief defence against the threat of the bomb was the secret dispersal of her industrial plant. The Soviet Union has not at any point been eager to open her territory to curious foreigners. The least welcome of all visitors, we should imagine, would be the United Nations inspectors whose job, as Russia see it, would be to provide the American Air Force with a complete target map of all Russia's secret factories.

Another important reason for the breakdown over atomic energy was the Soviet objection to passing over to a United Nations Commission the right to determine the development of atomic energy for industrial purposes. No country in the world has so large an area as Russia which might be made prosperous by the use of atomic energy, and no country is so likely to develop it irrespective of its economic cost. America, on the other hand, where existing forms of power have been cheapened more than anywhere else in the world, has much less incentive to apply atomic energy for industrial purposes and plenty of reason to fear Russia's development as an industrial Power.

It must be added that even if these obstacles could be overcome, even if Russia and America can agree to destroy their stockpiles and outlaw atomic warfare, the situation would not be very materially altered. The arms race would still continue. War can be carried on, as we know, with ordinary bombers. Moreover, if the scientists are to be believed, new methods of bacteriological warfare are now being prepared which will make atomic bombing out of date.

It seems to follow that the best results to be hoped for from renewed efforts by the United Nations to control atomic development would be international convention outlawing atom bombs, and thus bringing them into the same category as

poison gas, which was not used in the last world war because both sides possessed it. We are driven to the conclusion that hope lies less in the control of atomic weapons than in the general realisation among the Powers that survival depends on reaching a *modus vivendi* between East and West.

Perhaps the most obvious immediate result of Soviet possession of the atomic bomb is that America's unique position in the world is seriously challenged. The two great Powers will now bargain on more equal terms. Logically, it might be held that Russia, with less to fear from America, will have less reason to compensate for her weakness by aggressive gestures, while America, being less powerful, will be more ready for compromise. This is an optimistic view; the alternative, that the Soviet Union will be inclined to run greater risks of war in pursuit of her policy of world revolution, while America will be more afraid of "appeasement," seems at least equally likely. Hope does not lie in expecting either country to be pliable. It lies only in the consciousness among sane people that war under modern conditions, in which both sides are armed with modern weapons of mass destruction, has become not only horrible but fantastic and useless. A modern Clausewitz could not regard war as an instrument of policy, as a method of carrying out by other means policies pursued in times of peace. No definable object can be pursued by modern war. No one can guess where such a war will take us, whether in the direction of George Orwell's 1984 or towards Aldous Huxley's charming picture of the survivors, destroying with an elaborate ritual, the monstrous children to whom women give birth in a world deformed by radio-activity.

With some such prospect before us it might be expected that Mr. Vyshinsky's peace proposals would find a welcoming and immediate response amongst common people everywhere. If, in fact, the response is largely confined to members of the Communist Party, it is not because people in the West are bemused by warmongering or less conscious than Russians of the horror and futility of war. It is for two reasons. It is first because in Mr. Vyshinsky's mouth the appeal for a new peace pact between the five Powers sounds not like peace-making but like Russian propaganda. Mr. Vyshinsky does not state the appalling truth that we have now reached a situation in which Russia and the Western world are embarking on a grotesque armament race and pursuing policies that are likely to lead to war. He puts forward no constructive suggestions for easing the tension. He everywhere justifies military pressure where it is used by Russia while denouncing as imperialist war-making every increase of Anglo-American power. The second reason is that the world has become so bewildered by words, so distrustful of everything that sounds like propaganda, that it is doubtful whether the most angelic speech by any spokesman of the four great Powers would be regarded with anything but cynicism.

We assume that Mr. Vyshinsky, Mr. Acheson and Mr. Bevin all want to avoid war. We suggest that in days when the atomic bomb, like the great words of peace and war, is as much devalued as the pound sterling, their best course would be to *do* something peaceful. If Russia changes her present policy towards Yugoslavia, everything that Mr. Vyshinsky says will be listened to with respectful attention. On the American side, we noticed last week a small item of news which the press seemed hardly to think worth recording. While, as part of the cold war, America forbids countries receiving Marshall Aid to allow any goods to go behind the Iron Curtain which could help to strengthen the Soviet Union in war, Mr. Truman has now personally approved the export to Russia of £300,000 worth of oil-well equipment. This little item of news could be more important than the speeches of Mr. Bevin and Mr. Acheson.

GENERALS AND MISSIONARIES

(By a Correspondent)

ONE of the most wistful sentences to come out of Washington recently was provoked by reactions to the State Department "White Paper" on China. "In general," a State Department summary stated, "the White Paper apparently has not altered existing schools of opinion on U.S. policy towards China." This must have been a severe disappointment to Mr. Dean Acheson, who ordered the publication of the White Paper in the hope that its thousand pages would convince Congressional critics.

The idea that facts would silence the interventionist critics of the administration suggests that Dean Acheson misunderstands the peculiarly deep and emotional roots of the China controversy which has blasted more diplomatic reputations and rocked Washington more than any other foreign policy subject, including Russia. The bitterness of the controversy over China policy was chiefly responsible for the June, 1945, "Case of the Six" in which two State Department officials, a Naval Intelligence lieutenant, a magazine writer and two editors of the magazine *Amerasia* were accused of conspiring to "leak" State Department documents. Although he and three others were completely cleared, the State Department lost one of its most brilliant China specialists—John Service. Later, John Carter Vincent, a Rooseveltian liberal, China specialist and Head of the Office of Far Eastern Affairs got tired of being smeared as "pro-Communist" and became Minister to Switzerland. The most recent victim has been H. Walton Butterworth, the present Director of the Far Eastern office, whose promotion to Under-Secretary of State is opposed because he supposedly represents the "China clique" in the State Department.

Internecine political sniping has, in fact, so depleted the small corps of China specialists that during the crucial winter of 1948–9 there was not a single Foreign Service officer with extensive recent specialisation on China in the U.S Embassy in Nanking. Further indicative of the bitterness of the controversy over China policy is Dean Acheson's inability to find neutral experts even outside of his Department when he wanted them as advisers on Far Eastern affairs.

The secret of the controversy's bitterness lies in its overlay of sentimentality mixed with small time profiteering. For American thinking on China is sentimental; the chief cause is the fact that China has been the main area of American missionary activity. Whilst U.S. missionaries have done much to expand modern medicine and higher education in China, they have given a decidedly sentimental-paternal slant to American knowledge of China. These ties help explain the violence of the controversy. The China that is being "abandoned," so far as the "old China hands" are concerned, is not a strange and distant land. It is the place where Henry Luce was born, where Dr. Judd practised medicine and where Pearl Buck was once a missionary and a daughter of missionaries.

It also helps explain the sanctimoniousness which clothes most U.S. policy statements on China. Thus, whilst U.S. economic aid has done some good for the people of China—particularly when supervised by democratic-minded, pro-Chinese administrators—its primary purpose has clearly been to give economic support to the anti-Communist military efforts of the Kuomintang. Any doubt that this has been a political policy, designed for pro-Kuomintang, anti-Communist purposes, was cleared up by the halting of relief and food shipments to Communist-held areas. Yet U.S. policy statements insist that economic aid has the "sole objective of relieving the suffering of China."

Americans also have a curious economic sentimentality about China, dating from the famous clipper ships of the 18th Century which helped to found many New England fortunes. It was expressed in the hopeful salesman's phrase of "four hundred million customers." These dreams had little to do with economic realities. Pre-war, China ranked twentieth in the ranks of the world's trading nations and U.S. sales there were only two-thirds the value of the sales made by one large New York Department store. The U.S. business investment in China was only 200 million dollars, about a third of Britain's. After the war the U.S. came to dominate China's shrinking foreign trade, supplying about half of its imports and becoming China's chief creditor. This was not so much a question of business expansion as the by-product of the billions of U.S. Government aid poured in to bolster Kuomintang China. Actually, under the harassment of China's civil war, and the corruption and anti-foreign regulations of the Kuomintang, many U.S. firms threw up the sponge and virtually abandoned China as a field for economic expansion long before the Communist victories there.

The Administration of President Truman was from the outset pursuing a policy of "limited intervention" in China. It was circumscribed not by any limitation of desire to "contain" Communism; it was limited by the rottenness of the Kuomintang as a "container" and by the political, economic and military dangers of larger-scale intervention. American political and military strategists have traditionally been highly conscious of China's importance because of its geographic position, its huge population and its potentialities as a future world power. Soviet-American tension has heightened this interest because, in the event of war, a China friendly to the U.S. would provide an excellent base for air attacks on the U.S.S.R. and perhaps a man-power reservoir for an invasion army. A China friendly to the U.S.S.R., on the other hand, would provide an extensive screen for Siberian industries and a base of attack on pro-American areas in South and South-East Asia.

These facts have been in the foreground of Washington's consciousness because the Truman administration—particularly in its Far Eastern policy—has always been under considerable military influence. President Truman long had Admiral William D. Leahy as his personal chief-of-staff. The estimates which are put on his desk every morning are the product of the Central Intelligence Agency which is manned largely by military men and is now headed by an Admiral. President Truman's Far Eastern policy has been administered in large part by Generals: MacArthur, Hodges, Wedemeyer and Marshall.

General Marshall—both during his China mission and as Secretary of State—was probably the least militaristic and most broad-minded of the military men who have influenced U.S. post-war policy. But even whilst General Marshall negotiated, other high U.S. military figures told Kuomintang leaders of the possibility of an early "preventive war" against the Russians. This stiffened Kuomintang leaders into believing there

was no need for reform or compromise with the Communists because the U.S. would inevitably need the Kuomintang in the event of World War III. The Kuomintang's hopes for World War III and the Communists' suspicions that the U.S. was simply trying to disarm them in preparation for such a conflict made General Marshall's task impossible. When he finally threw up his mediation in January, 1947, his tone was "a plague on both your houses," though he advised that the Chinese liberals should take their place in the Government "under the leadership of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek." When he returned to become Secretary of State, military and economic aid continued to flow to China. But although he was under continual pressure from the Republicans to send more, he resisted because he knew that even that which was being sent was not used efficiently. In short, it was expediency that determined the "limited intervention" in China.

Last November, just after the Truman victory at the polls (and the Communist victory at Mukden) high level conferences were held in Washington to consider a modified "Greek-style" programme, under the prodding of the Defense Department. The plan is said to have involved an expenditure of a billion dollars a year, half for military purposes. Ten thousand troops were suggested, broken up into small command detachments to plan strategy and direct tactics, as in Greece. General Marshall then Secretary of State, turned down the programme; already 60 per cent. of U.S. aid had fallen into Communist hands; he felt that further aid would only harvest anti-American sentiment. Furthermore, too extensive an economic involvement in China might divert funds from the execution of a European policy beginning to show some results.

The effect of these November discussions was to write off the Kuomintang and to pull strategic planning back to Japan, Okinawa and the Philippines. In December the U.S. Military Advisory Group began withdrawing from China. The U.S. Navy was ordered to begin withdrawing from Tsingtao. By the spring it was clearer than ever to Secretary Marshall, and to Dean Acheson who succeeded him, that China was lost to the Communists. The State Department began to speculate whether it was better to try to wean Mao Tse-tung away from Moscow by economic inducements or to try to wreck his regime by economic warfare.

The battle between the Democratic "limited interventionists" and the Republican "active interventionists" has obscured the existence of several groups in the U.S. which have consistently opposed any aid to the Kuomintang. And this has been further obscured by the conservative trends of the U.S. news agencies. Although rather weak in political influence, the consistent opponents of intervention have had a substantial and growing section of U.S. public opinion with them. In April, 1948, the Gallup Poll reported that 39 per cent. of the people polled supported aid to Kuomintang China and 12 per cent. opposed it. By November, 1948, 32 per cent. favoured aid and fully 34 per cent. opposed it. By this June only 22 per cent. advocated aid and 43 per cent. voted to keep hands off China. This sharp swing against intervention in China has also been reflected in the rapid drop of private contributions to organisations distributing aid to China. Leadership of the anti-intervention forces has come both from liberal critics among Democratic Party supporters and progressive and radical opponents of the Truman doctrine as a whole. The agitation of Henry Wallace's Progressive Party and the American Communist Party against aid to the Kuomintang has been part of their general campaigns to "get along with Russia and the Communists." But opposition to intervention has also come from liberals among the Truman Administration supporters. This is expressed in the liberal weeklies as the *Nation* and *New Republic* or dailies such as the New York *Post* or St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*. The general viewpoint of these liberals has been that while E.C.A. aid to Europe helps strengthen political democracy there, similar aid to Kuomintang China entrenches only medieval reaction and arouses anti-American antagonism.

Although small in political influence the liberal opponents of aid to the Kuomintang have had an impressive array of highly respected China specialists to support them. Included are a trio of academic experts with extensive and realistic knowledge of China: John K. Fairbank of Harvard, Nathaniel Peffer of Columbia University and Owen Lattimore of Johns Hopkins University, once political advisor to Chiang Kai-shek. And, as Professor Peffer, a former newspaperman with wide China experience, said early this year: "The fact is that nobody has supported the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek in the past ten years except the American Congress—for reasons known only to itself or perhaps stimulated by a very shrewd and equally unscrupulous group of lobbyists."

It is an interesting commentary on contemporary U.S. politics that the State Department would not dare to call for advice on its liberal critics who have, on the record, made the most accurate predictions of the repercussions of American policy in China.

A LONDON DIARY

It reveals a great deal about the Chancellor's reputation that the chief concern of the man in the street about the devaluation of the pound seems to be how Sir Stafford Cripps could tell a lie. A friend who spent most of last week talking to working-class people in a prosperous Midland town tells me that once the obvious answer had been given most people were very ready to accept it and pleased to discount the smear campaign in certain Tory newspapers. By and large he found that working women tended to shake their heads and say that devaluation was beyond them, whereas the men folk, especially of course trade unionists, were desperately anxious to get the facts and even at factory gate meetings, with the buses roaring by, refused to be fobbed off with anything less than a full statement of how it all happened. Most of them clearly felt that they weren't getting what they wanted either from the *Herald* or from the *Worker*, let alone from the Tory Press. Indeed, they seemed to suspect that everything they read in the newspapers was propaganda. This confirms my own impression that trade union audiences are increasingly showing what used to be classed as a middle-class preference for facts as against rhetoric. Strachey's broadcast last Saturday seems to have been better received than the Chancellor's "because he didn't try to lecture us or get at us, but gave us the stuff and left us to make up our own minds." Raucous appeals, whether by Left-wingers or by Right-wingers, are brushed off by the new type of young worker who does not remember the days of Keir Hardie nor feel himself a member of a dispossessed class. They particularly resent being told that the solution of our problems is to "work harder." In a modern factory increased output is seldom a matter of harder work but of increased managerial efficiency and better Labour relations. Sometimes when I hear politicians or read leading articles I wonder whether these propagandists have even seen a conveyor belt.

* * *

The Filey Rally was an imaginative idea which proved that routine does not always reign in Transport House. Why not combine politics and pleasure? Is the price of freedom perpetual Committees? Cannot the life of a Labour Party member transcend canvassing, and is the Blackpool funfair the only fling permissible for Conference delegates? Anyway, those who went to Filey seem all to have come away jollier and better equipped to face the political chores of fighting Epping, or holding Preston, or keeping Tories off the council at Mynyddislwyn. An American friend who spent some days at the camp was particularly impressed by the younger people. "Sometimes," he said, "you begin to succumb to the American press picture of the Labour Party as a collection of ageing trade unionists and careerist intellectuals. But at Filey I discovered how much vitality there really is in the Party." For instance? Examples tumbled out of him. Excellent organisation. Discussions with his meal-time neighbours. "How much higher," he said, "is the level of public speaking than at similar meetings back home! Facts clearly presented, without notes, without redundancy. Even if the platform was embarrassed, I enjoyed the row at the youth meeting, when the floor was trying to establish its right to pass resolutions on matters of policy. Why doesn't Labour really build a youth movement that can use this kind of enthusiasm and ability instead of damping it down?" I agree. I add, however, that this rally is a real beginning. After all, whether we like it or not, a combination of Morgan Philips and Butlin typifies quite a lot of the Labour Party.

* * *

Several correspondents have written to suggest that a number of the policemen in Dalston and other East London districts were once members of the Palestine Police. Is this true? If it is, it might explain such anti-Semitic discrimination on the part of the police in the East End as was described in this journal last week by Mr. Hadlow (the pseudonym for a well-known police reporter). I notice that Arthur Koestler, in his latest book, *Promise and Fulfilment*, says that anti-Jewish feeling reached "scandalous proportions" in the Palestine Police—scandalous, that is, even when we recall the nature of the provocation in this least necessary of British wars. Koestler writes: "With Black and Tan veterans in leading positions, riddled with former members of Mosley's Blackshirts, the Palestine Police was one of the most disreputable organisations in the British Commonwealth." When the Palestine Police force was wound up, its members were offered employment in the Metropolitan Police. How many accepted? And how many were then drafted into East London districts?

* * *

I am sure that Edmund Stevens, the *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent in Stockholm, did not know that he had a genuine scoop when he cabled a new Soviet lullaby to his paper two weeks ago. The *Tass* statement upon Soviet atomic progress began with an odd summary of construction work, such as canals and hydro-electric schemes, in which blasting was done by "the latest technical means." To Mr. Stevens, this said nothing new. For he had read the lullaby written by Yevgeny Dolatovsky. This describes how the time had come to turn upside down a granite mountain in the Siberian taiga to secure its

ore. The geologists, after twelve months work, called in the professors. They were followed by a company of sappers, whose commander laid an explosive charge :—

Not T.N.T. or dynamite.
There's a stronger substance
In your country now.
I shall not name it,
Rock-a-bye.

At the appointed hour there came a blast.
The granite vanished into smoke,
Lighting the surrounding taiga
With go'den brilliance.
Let the wave from the blast
Roll on to foreign shores
Where it will sound
A warning to our foes.

Did this refer to an atomic blast which was noticed by American geiger counters as well as Russian poets ?

* * *

Lobbies are an inseparable part of American pressure politics. There is no secret about them. Every so often the *Congressional Record* prints a list of officially registered groups and individuals who spend their time trying to get Congress to see their point of view. Some of them draft speeches and actual Bills and give other forms of help to responsive legislators. Now and again they are investigated, and I see a new inquiry has just been authorised. As usual, it is overdue. In the first six months of this year, the lobbies spent an admitted four million dollars. One-eighth of this was spent by the American Medical Association, which has been fighting President Truman's proposed Health Service. The Committee for Constitutional Government, an extremely reactionary group, paid out another 300,000 dollars, and the electric companies spent another 225,000. No doubt they have received value for their money, though I suspect that any full account of the way it was spent might embarrass a good number of Senators and Representatives. But these figures alone—apart from expenditures that are never published—help to explain why Congress obstructs the Fair Deal.

* * *

I had always thought of the honey bee as the pattern of rational behaviour, until the other day I stood in a friend's garden and watched his bees robbing. It's an astonishing sight. Suddenly, for no apparent reason, the bees from three or four hives attacked the last hive in the row. They did not seem to worry much about taking the honey home. Instead, they fought their way in and smashed all the combs. When we peeped in after sunset, the hive looked exactly like a modern city destroyed in total war. The combs were in ruins; the floor was inches deep in honey, and clothed with dead bees. Next day we set about stopping the robbers. The best book to hand, told us to cover the attacked hive with sacks, soaked in water, so as to thwart the aggressors on the theory that bees stop work when it rains. This completely failed. Feeling rather desperate, we turned to an old sixpenny manual and discovered the adage "in the case of robbing, go for the robber." So we did. We shoved handfuls of straw into the doorways of all the robber hives and waited not very hopefully. To our amazement, within half an hour, the walls of the hives were covered with crawling bees trying desperately to squeeze through the hay. We had won. I don't know what the moral of this story is. I felt that one of my illusions had been shattered. But my friend says that he is enormously encouraged by the feeling that, after all, those confounded bees are not more sensible than we are.

CRITIC

MAIDEN'S PRAYER

". . . Most of the land expropriated from Czech and Slovak farmers under the 1948 reform is being retained as State farms . . . and these work on plan targets like the factories, with goose girls and pig maids striving for their norms." (*Replanning in Czechoslovakia*, by Doreen Warriner, NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, September 17.)

Early one morning, just as the day was dawning,
I heard a pig maid singing in the model farm below ;
" O, don't defy me—O, don't mortify me——
How shall I reach my norm if you refuse to grow ? "

" Remember the litter that we raised for last year's quota, dear,
Remember your certificate for Productivity.
O, never fail me now—be a good Comrade sow—
Eat your day's ration up, and leave the rest to me."

" Remember the goose-girl and her flock across the valley,
Remember how they triumphed by Market Co-op. Day ;
Exceeded their quota by laying to a rota,
Produced one vast Collective egg to mark the First of May."

" Remember the Party-pledge you gave to your pig maid, dear ;
The ratio of increase we aimed to put through.
Now you're contriving to sabotage my striving—
I'll never reach my norm if you won't be true."

" Forgotten the days when pigs were democrats and decadent ;
When piglets were Party-less, and output was low.
Now our economy is geared to efficiency—
But how *can* I reach my norm if you won't try to grow ? "

J. E. C.

THIS ENGLAND

Prizes are awarded of £1 for the first entry and 5/- for each of the others printed. Paste entries on a POSTCARD.

Incidentally, I can contribute a hitherto unrecorded incident in Monday's match at Bournemouth. Frank Chester was asked what he would say if the Duke of Edinburgh when bowling made an appeal for l.b.w. which he could not allow.

" With permission, Sir, not out," replied that most famous of umpires.—*Daily Telegraph.* (W. R. J. Atterbury.)

Ford Prefect 1939 faultless cond. New engine 10,000 miles ago. Avail. immed. Txd. Nearest £300, incl. 6 new-laid eggs for willing buyer.—*Advt. in Evening Standard.* (Mrs. B. Maunders.)

Officials of one Government Department have been instructed that they must not describe devaluation as devaluation. They have received a circular which reads :

" Memorandum to Chief Examiners.—In conformity with a Treasury order which has just been issued, official correspondence should not refer to the " devaluation " of the pound. Some such phrase as " the change in the dollar-sterling rate " should be used instead."—*Daily Telegraph.* (H. D. Lyon.)

Sight of ants carrying tomato skins, inspired members of a Stafford nature society to move a boulder, weighing two and a half tons, half a mile up Pudding Hill.—*Reynold's News.* (Giovanna Lesley.)

A man walked into a public assistance office, picked up a chair and smashed eight windows while three Civil Servants just stood by and watched, a court was told yesterday.

The officials explained that they were not allowed to lay hands on anyone seeking assistance.—*Daily Mirror.* (B. V. M. Walker.)

THE LUNATIC FRINGE

WHEN we pulled up in front of the big restaurant in Munich's Augustastrasse there were some five or six hundred people lined up in the street, some of them excitedly pressing forward to ask if we had any news of *him*. When we got to our table, greeted in good old Munich fashion by the proprietor of the restaurant, he confirmed the obvious conclusion from the behaviour of that peculiar and steadily growing crowd. They were expecting Bruno Gröning ; indeed the proprietor had sent his own car some 300 miles to Herford in Westphalia to fetch him. A mere hint of the great news was spreading like a prairie-fire and when we went to the window we saw the crowd in the street had increased to well over five thousand.

It wasn't easy to make our way back to the table, for by now the cripples and the very sick had been admitted, and scores of them, some on crutches, some in bath-chairs, were crowding the corridors and the staircase leading from the *Bierlokal* downstairs up to the *Weinstube* on the first floor. Leaning against the wall, supported by her parents, stood a very beautiful girl of 15. Her pale face bore the fixed smile of the blind, but hers was no hysterical blindness that might conceivably be cured by faith-healing : her eyes were quite dead. Yet, when I asked if she hoped to be cured, her smile seemed no longer pathetic, it was angelic. " Of course he will cure me," she said, " he must ! I have so much faith in him."

No doubt, Gröning is no ordinary faith-healer. But this would be hardly worth a second thought, if it were not for the man's amazing mass appeal. When I left, the entire block around the restaurant was filled with solid masses of humanity. They didn't need to be kept in order, they stood patiently, all through the night, in pouring rain, waiting for a mere glimpse of their hero. There were women with babes in arms, there were many cretinous children, some apathetic, others howling miserably ; yet the majority of that huge crowd looked quite normal, although whoever I spoke to complained of some ailment, devoutly convinced that *he* would heal it. Such mass appeal is an important symptom. What matters is the readiness of so many Germans to escape from reality, to throw themselves into any metaphysical adventure, to seek the magnetism of a personality and the dynamics—a favourite term !—of a movement rather than the sober facts of the times. True, such symptoms have been widespread in various periods of German history, but never so much as now.

Greatly puzzled as to how short the step might be from faith-healing to politics I was finally reassured that Gröning himself—a rather dumb and queer creature—is no budding politician. But what about others with a similar mass appeal ? What about Loritz and the 750,000 who voted for him ? I missed him at Munich (amid much speculation as to whether, if he were certified insane, he would lose his immunity as a M.P. and be forced to stand trial for slandering the Bavarian Government). But I saw much of him at Bonn and had one long talk with him.

He certainly has that mad glint in his eye which, in Central Europe, has meant the makings of many a political career. Rapidly shuffling along the endless corridors of the *Bundeshaus* with a queer cat-like agility, his personality would catch one's attention even if one did not recognise his face. When one can get him to settle down in a chair (which isn't easy), his talk is as torrential as it is platitudinous. He vehemently denies separatist as well as Right-wing leanings. He

told me that most people are "too terrorised to speak their minds" and that his fellow-M.P.s are "lost in a fog of lick-spittle"—a fair example of his style. He takes a dim view of parliamentary methods anyway and thinks that on every important issue the people ought to decide by referendum. As for economics, he thinks that all problems—in Bavaria at any rate—could be solved by a sufficiency of hydro-electric works. As for his party's potential place in future coalitions, he vehemently disclaims any such intention. Next year, he says, his party will be strong enough to rule alone.

Precisely the same optimistic view of his own party's prospects was given me by a leader of the "Bavarian Party" (over one million votes). He is not merely a party leader but a City Councillor of Munich too, a hefty young man strongly opinionated against economic planning and any kind of "Bolshevik experiment." He professed to be an ardent admirer of Mr. Churchill. "If you write an article about me," he said in his delightful Bavarian slang, "*sagen's ich lass ihn grüssen!*," and he asked me to convey his additional regards to Lord Vansittart and M. François Poncet, for both of whom he professed to feel equally devoted admiration. Incidentally, he showed no less admiration for one of the rival party leaders, none other than the famous Dr. Alois Hundhammer, member of the reigning Christian Social Union and Minister of Education in the Bavarian Government. That Minister proudly stroked his beautifully kept black beard as he told me about his "educational reform," allowing for as many as twenty-five University grants a year, (with the proviso of course, that the recipients of so much charity go to Church regularly and are otherwise well behaved). As for the "Eastern question" Hundhammer—like so many German politicians—professed to be quite adamant in his opinion that, so long as the Bolsheviks are in power "over there," not even a modicum of trade should be permissible with Eastern Germany. On that issue, he added with a broad smile, he begged to differ from his party and Cabinet colleague, Joseph Müller, who stubbornly insisted on a policy of the Open Door, at any rate so far as trade with Eastern Germany was concerned.

In Bonn they do not take Bavarian politics as seriously as they ought to. When I went there to seek out the more extreme Right-wing leaders I certainly found them to take a more "global" view than the despised *Kirchturmpolitiker*—almost terrifyingly so. My first contact in the *Deutsche Partei* (a partner in the coalition government) was genial old Commodore Ahrens, universally and comprehensibly respected as a quite unblemished war-hero, for his was the remarkable feat of bringing the "Bremen" home in the first week of the war. He is such a nice old gentleman that I felt almost sorry to embarrass him with the point-blank suggestion that, surely, the old Imperial black-white-red flag must be nearer to his heart than black-red-gold. It was a ticklish question—flags always are in Germany and we haven't heard the last of this one yet—but at this point in the interview Ahrens was succoured by two or three of his party leaders. Dr. Seebohm took over, and the friendly old Commodore, much to his relief, did not have to open his mouth again. Seebohm—now a member of Adenauer's Cabinet—is no less torrential a talker than Loritz, but he is very articulate and he has all the suavity of a company director used to talking an unruly board-meeting to a standstill. "Give us 7 or 8 billions a year for three or four years," he said "and we'll be on our feet again." (Not that many pounds, nor that many dollars, but merely the raw materials representing the $ equivalent in D. Marks!). When the talk veered round to the grievous problem of the Eastern Refugees and I ventured to wonder whether the hope for some sensible compromise on the Oder-Neisse issue was utopian or practical politics, I never got a chance to open my mouth again. Compromise? Why, the mere idea was abhorrent to any German! There *was* no compromise on that frontier problem! And since the Western Allies had got Germany into that mess, it was their bounden duty to stand by her now *mit Gut und Blut*. In other words, it wasn't merely a case of a few measly billions needed, it was a case for blood—if need be.

The *Deutsche Partei*, incidentally (as befitting a member of the coalition), is by no means on the extreme Right-wing. That is occupied by the *Nationale Rechte*, which on September 10th and 11th, emerged as an amalgamation of three or four groups and parties led by the former *Deutsche Rechtspartei*. When I saw their leaders they were still at loggerheads on various issues, and at least one seemed to resent the vehemence of his colleague's outburst against economic planning. They seem to envisage—still rather vaguely—a sort of corporate state. They are strongly and openly opposed to black-red-gold (quite logically, too, since that flag was associated with whatever has been genuinely progressive in the last 140 years of German history), and they accuse the *Deutsche Partei* of having insincerely compromised on that issue by "selling" their own natural antipathy against the "new" flag for a share in the coalition. But they are quite unanimous on the Oder-Neisse issue. The pre-*Anschluss* frontiers of 1937 are the "minimum" demand. "That'll do for the time being; we'll see about the rest later," old Dr. Leuschgen mumbled into his white goatee beard. He and his *Nationaldemokratische Partei*, incidentally, had only just joined the Right-wing extremists, having previously been in an electoral alliance with the F.D.P., i.e., the "Liberals" who are certainly now one of the more compact parties of the Right.

Well, German party politics *are* complex, but so are the issues that have given them shape. On some of them—belated and distorted dismantling, farcical "denazification" and, above all, the East-West cleavage, the failure of Potsdam, the lack of a definite (and sensible) frontier settlement—it is a case of chickens coming home to roost.

Since the refugee problem, politically even more than economically, is one of the all-pervading issues, I went to see a large camp of refugees in the grim neighbourhood of Dachau. I found every man, woman and child in that camp convinced that some time soon and "somehow"—though no one could say just how—they would return to Gleiwitz, Breslau, Oppeln or wherever they came from. Admittedly camp life—though Dachau is said to be one of the best—is not very attractive. But I have also seen scores of individual refugees assimilated in steady jobs and in new homes of their own. Even among the more fortunate of these, this time no more than last year and in the first two years, I found very few prepared to take roots in their new surroundings. Nor do these involuntary guests get much of a helping hand from their equally involuntary hosts. On the contrary, resentment is quite mutual. Yet, a reproach for lack of Christian charity might be misplaced by anybody who has never experienced what exactly, in terms of everyday life, it means to share one's kitchen and one's bathroom with a number of none too sympathetic strangers.

For some time now the refugees in Western Germany have been organised in the *Centralverband heimatvertriebener Deutscher*, with a paid-up membership of two millions. The subscription is only 50 *Pfennigs* a month, but the additional income from well-to-do members is large enough to support a nation-wide organisation as well as the movement's own paper, a huge output of pamphlets, and frequent mass meetings where tens of thousands are held spellbound by the oratory of their leader, a Catholic priest by the name of Georg Göbel. During the recent election campaign he tried unsuccessfully to turn his movement into a political party; but it still is a thoroughly political movement, which controls great masses united by common suffering, common interests and common hysterics.

When I went to Krefeld to see Dr. Langen, organiser for Nordrhein-Westphalen, he had just arrived from the sick-bed of his leader Göbel at Lippstadt in Westphalia. Langen was a judge in Danzig, and he, too, like most mass-leaders in Germany, drives himself (and others) into a frenzy of activity and somewhat hysterical talk. When I quoted the official figures of 7,600,000 refugees in the *Bundesstaat* and 3½ millions in the Eastern Zone, he sternly rebuked me. They call the "Soviet Zone", *Die Mittelzone*, since *Der Osten*, of course, is their own homeland, temporarily lost but soon to be recovered. "Recovered by war?" I asked, and I was answered by an obvious stock-phrase: "We are no neo-fascist warmongers, we are for a United Europe, but we want to return to our own homeland." How exactly this was to be achieved, and how such peaceful intention could be squared with the fiery tone of the movement's press and mass-meetings, I could never make out.

HEINRICH FRAENKEL

"THE BRITISH WON'T WORK"

TWENTY-FOUR hours before Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Bevin steamed up New York harbour on the *Mauretania*, a hypnotic voice had been heard in American homes charging that the real cause for the British financial crisis was the unwillingness of the British to work. The voice was not that of the jovial Irish-American pickets parading on the dock as the British delegates landed. Such demands for "independence" are generally greeted with good-natured banter and carry relatively little political weight. This voice, oddly enough, came from London itself. It was heard in several million American homes. It was pitched in a high, urgent dynamic key with a note of authority calculated to sweep poorly informed listeners along under its spell. Furthermore, the sponsor of this overseas broadcast could not have been more respectable. It was the giant General Motors Corporation itself, so affluent and powerful that it is now subject to one of the big anti-trust suits of the Justice Department.

The voice was that of Henry J. Taylor, who describes himself in 43 self-contributed lines to the American "*Who's Who*" as "journalist, economist and author" and gives along with this a comprehensive account of his foreign travels as an American correspondent. The story of this broadcast gives an intimate picture of one phase of American public opinion and the people who seek to mould it. For English listeners, Mr. Taylor's strong views may have more than passing interest.

Mr. Taylor is a first-person type of commentator. His London broadcast began with the explanation that it was the last on a 30,000-mile round the world trip. Once a week he had been telling listeners back home under the G.M. aegis what he saw abroad. Now he had come to London,

His speech was keyed to the impending Cripps-Bevin arrival in the U.S.A. The British, he said, were bogging down under Socialism at the expense of the American taxpayers. British troubles were not "all" due to Socialism. "But Socialism has made their situation impossible" he said. "Moreover it has wasted our money faster than we can pour it in." He continued: "The British have tried every other solution for their problem except work. Today, by Government direction, they are still working only a 42½-hour week. If they worked a 45-hour week they could pay for all the food they buy from us. If they worked a 48-hour week they could balance the national budget." There was a good deal more of this. Mr. Taylor told his American listeners that Cripps and Bevin were not over in the U.S.A. to save Britain but to "save Socialism." In view of the complex world financial crisis which is still revealing itself, Mr. Taylor was speaking in biased, uninformed and dangerous terms.

Part of the American broadcaster's technique is to give breathless inside information of a startling nature. Here is Mr. Taylor's contribution: "Here's the news. It has been undisclosed to the British people—kept an absolute secret. But the secret affects us too, in your land and mine. So it should come out. Behind closed doors the British Labor Socialists decided, on the eve of departing for Washington, that they were going to jump the gun (for a national election). As a big, bold political gesture, and as a surprise to the British people, they plan to call for an election fast. They plan to call for it in the next 60 or 90 days—months ahead of the regular election time. This, they figure, will give them their chance to get under the wire before the collapse strikes the man in the street."

Mr. Taylor may or may not be correct in this forecast; in any case it hardly seems likely that he is in the confidence of the Attlee Government. But what followed might cause considerable embarrassment to the Opposition. Says Mr. Taylor—"As for Mr. Churchill, in opposition, *I can give you his personal view on this.*" (My italics.) "Right or wrong, it is his opinion that he can go to town on this issue (the Cripps-Bevin trip to Washington) . . . Mr. Churchill has been working on speeches with this end in view. At the right time he intends to meet the opposition's strategy by taking the stump to say it's a disgrace for the Labor Socialist leaders to talk against America after all America has done to help the British people."

There is a great deal more to all this. Mr. Taylor seeks to marshal American sentiment against the British Government by distorted statistics, erroneous conclusions, and inferences like that implying that Cripps and Bevin will "talk against America" while Mr. Churchill springs to its defence. The Taylor attack epitomises a certain type of approach at the British problem in America, a half-gleeful feeling that Britian is now somehow being punished for abandoning capitalism. Probably Sir Stafford Cripps has never heard of Mr. Taylor but views like this are prevalent enough to have caused him, in a speech on September 9, before the National Press Club at Washington, to reply to the general charges. Industrial production in Britain, already at an all-time high, is steadily rising, Sir Stafford said. "The average working week today is just over 45 hours." Obviously Mr. Taylor could have got the right figures himself in London if he had cared to. They would, of course, have interfered with his argument.

Men like Taylor, sponsored by great American corporations like General Motors, are not really interested in Britain, however, but in the United States. What they are really attacking is the New Deal of Roosevelt and the Fair Deal of President Truman. Under the American wireless system the Government does not broadcast through any public stations. The news comes to you "sponsored" by a corporation. Some of these news commentators have been consistently good, such as Elmer Davis, Joseph C. Harsch, Raymond Swing and others. But there is always a temptation for a giant corporation, whose management is conservative, to employ a like-minded conservative commentator. They do not slant the news consciously; their minds are slanted to begin with.

Except for factual mistakes, freedom of speech allows a paid American commentator like Mr. Taylor to take any approach to the news he likes under the system of private ownership and sponsorship. The real responsibility rests with his employer, General Motors, which renews his contract at periodic intervals. This leads to an examination of General Motors itself.

Cripps and Bevin made no secret of the genuine sympathy they found here in Washington in the Truman administration. Despite all transatlantic mud-slinging, this appears to be the prevailing feeling toward Britain in the United States at this time. The Taylors are noisy but their influence can be over-estimated by those not conversant with the salutary gap that exists between popular American thinking and the conservative views expressed by some editorial pages and conservative radio commentators hired by big business. For example, the Press was overwhelmingly against President Roosevelt, yet the total number of votes for his four opponents in the Electoral College over the years would not have elected any one of them, so strong was F.D.R.'s support from the masses. In the same way, in the Truman-Dewey election last year, the trade publication *Editor & Publisher* found that 65 per cent of the daily papers with 78 per cent of the total circulation supported Dewey. Mr. Truman won handily.

The General Motors-sponsored Taylor attack on the British Government is, however, symbolic and symptomatic. American big business deeply fears the rising tide of social control. And there is no better example of giantism in American big business than General Motors itself and its two great affiliated concerns, the du Pont Company and United States Rubber. The Department of Justice anti-trust action against the three was filed June 30. The Attorney-General said the action is directed "to the breaking up of the largest single concentration of economic power in the United States." This suit has been in preparation two years and unquestionably will be a long and dramatic court battle carried to the Supreme Court—big business versus Big Government with stakes of enormous size. The du Pont company is the largest producer of chemicals, explosives and powder in the nation, a bigger and more competent organisation than pre-war I. G. Farben in Germany. General Motors is the largest manufacturer of cars in America, U.S. Rubber the largest manufacturer of tires. The Government charges they are all controlled by two small personal holding companies owned by members of the fabulously rich du Pont family. The du Ponts, incidentally, have been strongly conservative Republicans for years; their views, it can be assumed, are well to the right of Henry J. Taylor's, their spokesman. The du Pont family owns, according to the Government suit, 23 per cent of the 44 million shares of G.M. common stock, and 17 per cent of U.S. Rubber. These blocks are big enough to control the two giant companies. This huge horizontal cartel, it is charged, operates so that each company gives the other secret rebates, gives them priority in purchasing products, and what is most important, perhaps, subsidizes its own continued expansion by ploughing back profits from the immense aggregation while smaller competitors have to go to the capital markets for loans at higher rates.

That, in brief, is the background of Mr. Taylor and the power behind him. His September 5 broadcast was carried over approximately 150 radio stations in as many American cities. Officials in Washington of the network carrying the speech would hazard no exact estimate of his listening audience but agreed it was "several millions." These listeners in American homes heard his strident, authoritative voice declaring from London, under the aegis of the great General Motors empire, at a time of desperate international crisis, "The British have tried every other solution for their problem except work."

Washington. RICHARD STROUT

SO THEY SAY . . .

Backs to the Wall

Daily Telegraph, September 26:—

News of an atomic explosion in Russia has been received in the West with a notable and commendable absence of hysteria. . . .

Daily Telegraph, September 24:—

Newspaper correspondents were hurriedly called into the office of Mr. Ross, the President's Press secretary, who ordered the doors to be closed, and said: "No one is to leave this room until the President's announcement is in the hands of every reporter here." Afterwards correspondents ran to the telephones and within minutes the news was flashed over American radio networks. Musical programmes were interrupted as announcers broke in with reports, and asked listeners to stand by for further announcements. Special editions were quickly sold out. Telephone switchboards in Washington newspaper offices were swamped with calls from people who had heard distorted versions of the radio announcements . . . the communique was followed by a stream of rather wild comment. Many members of Congress seemed to take it for granted that war was now "just around the corner."

Daily Express, September 24:—

There is to-night an element of panic in Washington . . . Senators and Congressmen are on the air every half-hour or so warning against hysteria. . . . New York's police department assured the city: "We have a blueprint to handle any major disaster here."

Daily Mail, September 24:—

The news spread like wildfire through the labyrinthine corridor of the massive Pentagon building, which is Armed Services headquarters . . . there was confusion and excitement on Capitol Hill, where Senator McMahon, chairman of the Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Committee . . . only yesterday told the Senate: "If Russia has the atom bomb she could send bombs to American ports in tramp steamers and blow up 35,000,000 people."

Daily Graphic, September 24:—

Shocked by President Truman's disclosure . . a jittery U.S. was last night expecting swift reinforcement of its heavy-bomber forces in Western Europe.

Observer, September 25:—

General George C. Kenney, former Chief of the Strategic Air Command . . . one of America's leading strategic bombing experts, declared that a 24-hour radar alert had now become essential "to guard against a sneak attack."

Daily Herald, September 26 :—

"The greatest danger facing us is panic," says the *New York Post* . . . Congressman Rankin, who wants the nation's administrative capital moved into the Kentucky Mountains, is now backed by Senator Wiley, who demands that the Defence Chiefs should also go underground because . . . "if (the Pentagon) is hit, the entire nervous system of American defence will be smashed," he claims in an excited one-man manifesto.

Operation Nomenclature

Daily Mail, September 24 :—

BERIA (OF THE OGPU) BOMB?

Russia's first atom explosion may have been a "Beria bomb"—named after Mr. Lavrenti Beria, who is understood to be in charge of atom research. . . .

Department of Wishful Thinking

Daily Mail, September 24 :—

PERHAPS IT WENT OFF BY MISTAKE.

. . . in Whitehall speculation was aroused by the suggestion that Sir David Kelly, British Ambassador in Moscow, would make enquiries and would express the Government's hope that there was not a heavy loss of life. . . .

Tough Going

Star, September 23 :—

15-YEAR JOB TO MAKE MEAT TENDER.

Evening Standard, September 23 :—

30-YEAR TASK TO FIND OUT "WHY IS MEAT TOUGH?"

Department of Amplification

Evening Standard, September 12 :—

Seeing Dr. W. R. Inge go into St. Paul's yesterday you would hardly believe that here was a man of 89. . . . He still speaks well. His voice came resonant and clear over the amplifiers. . . .

Daily Telegraph, September 12 :—

At St. Paul's yesterday there was a large congregation to hear Dr. Inge preach after an absence of seven years. It was a fruitless mission. Not a sentence could be heard. . . . at fault was the amplifying system. . . .

Final Clarification

Daily Herald, September 26 :—

PLAIN MAN'S GUIDE TO DEVALUATION.

De-valuation means "valuing down"—putting a smaller value on a thing—that is, smaller than before devaluation occurred. . . .

Daily Mirror, September 21 :—

½d. OFF DEARER BREAD—MORE PRICE CUTS COMING.

AUTOLYCUS

LIVING OFF THE COUNTRY

A MAN who can provide an outlet for our charitable instincts, in these days, deserves to get on. Such is the case of M. Whenever I take the truck up to the main road to fill up with petrol at the village garage, M. is out in the wide gravel pull-in before the *Royal George*, with a tray of buttonhole nosegays: they are tastefully made with flowers from his garden or from the copses, and they constitute a sort of floral calendar, since he first appears with violets and primroses at about Easter time, and finishes the season with Michaelmas daisies and tiny chrysanthemums towards the end of the autumn. He sells the nosegays for sixpence, and as the huge red and white motor-coaches which rumble and stink in an endless stream to Margate and Ramsgate, Folkestone and Herne Bay, pull off the arterial road to give the passengers a break, M. darts forward with his tray of bouquets. He rarely fails to sell them all.

There is a good deal of competition: the pub. itself gets most of the shillings from the male holiday-makers; then there is the tea tent, with strong tea in vast enamel pots, buns, pastries and chewing gum; there are three stalls selling fruit and flowers and even vegetables; there is even, fifteen miles from the coast, a whelk stall. But M. has an enormous advantage over these competitors for the trippers' money: he is old, looking at least seventy, and apparently frail, with a slight body, white hair, a soft voice. He makes no verbal appeal to prospective customers, but simply thrusts his tray at them and looks appealing.

The customers with whom M. has to deal are shrewd and careful; they come from Bow and Stratford, Deptford and Rotherhithe, and cannot afford to spend carelessly. They are out to get their money's worth of enjoyment, to which end they wear paper caps, shout and laugh a good deal, and do, in fact, succeed in throwing off the constraint of workaday sobriety and reserve. They look and they are happy, and if they can get from M. or anyone else an honest sixpen'orth of flowers, while at the same time feeling that they are conferring a benefit upon a deserving and pitiful case, they will cheerfully do so. The exclamations of the women as they clamber stiffly from the coaches are particularly enlightening: "Poor old thing!" they say; and their men, anxious to give pleasure all round and to enjoy the brief annual bout of spending without earning, say, "'Ere y'are, gran'pa!" M., expressionless, hands over the nosegay and takes his tanner. Everyone is pleased. And we, who know a little more about M., cannot, with the worst will in the world, demonstrate that the deal has been anything but honourable all round. For M. is not seventy: he is eighty-four. He is not frail, but as strong as any of his several sons, in their fifties and sixties, and even as strong as his grandsons, even more numerous, and approaching their forties. Finally, he is not poor: he could, for example, buy half-a-dozen of the shining luxury coaches in which his customers arrive at and depart from the *Royal George* at the rate of up to two thousand a day.

It would be interesting to know the average sum of money laid out by the motor coach passenger in the course of a journey from, say, Rotherhithe to Herne Bay. The coaches stop at least once, perhaps twice. Whether luck or management decides the particular pub. at which a particular company stops its vehicles, I do not know. Certainly it must make an immense difference to the trade of an inn; and about each inn there has sprung up a number of ancillary enterprises, so that between London and the seaside towns there has come into being a series of fifty-mile long ribbon markets supported by the traffic of coaches, private cars and lorries.

Strawberries. . . . Cut Flowers. . . . Fruit. . . . Apples. . . . Tomatoes: and, of course, *Teas.* The announcements vary from professionally sign-written fixtures handsomely varnished and having an air of permanence, to crudely chalked scrawls on old pieces of plank. Some of them are ingenious: *Drive Slow. . . . Concealed Entrance to Fresh Fruit Stall*, for example. But the majority name barely the produce to be had.

The trade is prosperous: a fruit stall in the pull-in of the *Royal George* takes an average of twelve pounds a day throughout a season beginning at Easter and ending with September. The stall is run by a man and his wife, who grow their flowers in a large cottage garden, but buy their other stock. They pay no rent nor rates. I cannot say what sort of return the tax collector sees from them, but any really effective check must be impossible, for all buying and selling is for cash on the nail. The surrounding gardens all share in the prosperity of the stall: in the course of six months in every year, about two thousand pounds is removed from the coach travellers and pocketed by the village gardeners whose soft fruit, flowers and tree-fruit would, in all probability, not be sold elsewhere. Prices are a shade lower than those ruling in the urban shops, but since the market is so conveniently local the grower has no transport or handling charges to face. No fruit-buying commission agent is going to bother with two or three pound lots from village gardens, but the stall will take these small quantities and pay cash. In this way a farm labourer with a medium-sized or large garden will take perhaps £30 in the season for produce which he would grow in any case, enabling his wife to buy the tinned peas which she so greatly prefers to the fresh ones. The stall does not, however, confine itself to local produce; that was the original idea, but expansion has taken place, and imported plums, peaches, grapes and nuts, as well as mineral water drinks, now constitute an important part of the trade.

But to return to M. He is not in the same class as these latter-day hawkers whose business is brought to them, and if he gives himself the trouble to make and sell four or five hundred buttonholes a week it is because he cannot bear to see thirty or forty pounds a month going on to the coast when he knows how to trap them *en route*. Money is serious, and no opportunity of collecting it must be overlooked. He is by nature, but not by calling, that very rare bird in Britain, a peasant. Not by calling because he does not actually cultivate the land, or hardly at all, but simply lays its natural produce under contribution.

M. owns a house, of course . . . as a matter of fact he owns about ten thousand pounds worth of real estate. The house he lives in is shabby, ugly and squalid, and his way of life is equally so, for he lives alone, ungroomed, and dirtily careless of the most elementary of hygienic customs. His house is also his place of business: from time to time an unwontedly quiet queue of village housewives forms up at M.'s back door, each to enter in turn, put down a florin or half a crown, and emerge with a blood-stained newspaper parcel about eight times the size of the weekly meat ration. M. has taken a deer in the great wood which stretches beyond the main road for many miles south and west. His ancestors would have lost the sight of their eyes for the same enterprise. But M. is safe, no one cares about the deer. Rabbits, hares, pheasants and partridge are another matter, but I have yet to hear of any gamekeeper or policeman getting within miles of M. Sixty-five years of constant practice have taught him not only where to find his game, but how to dispose of it without fuss. After all, when he began, in the '80s of the last century, poaching was a serious matter, to be learnt under the threat of a savage sentence.

But perhaps M.'s most profitable line is mushrooms: not only does he know where they grow; he has arrangements with perhaps a dozen farmers whose pastures he scours from earliest light every morning during the spring and autumn fungus seasons. He is to be seen at nine o'clock in the market town, thirty or forty pounds of mushrooms in a sack on his shoulder, on his way to the greengrocer he supplies. A glance at somebody else's *Farmer and Stock-Breeder* gives him the London market price. Probably his average receipts are at the rate of 4*s.* a pound. He will not tell how many pounds he gathers during the year, but I should not be surprised to hear that his income, from this source

alone, is of the order of five hundred a year.

M.'s character is as interesting as his acquisitive industry is remarkable: he is quite above those attributes of humanity by means of which he lives, and his customers must be an unobservant lot, since none of them ever seems to notice the brilliant, calculating, all-seeing eye in that apparently pitiful countenance. He is neither gentle, kind, nor tolerant, and absolutely free from that live-and-let-live modern spirit of co-operation. Against his competitors he carries on unremitting war. If a careless customer who has bought and eaten a pound of strawberries drops the empty punnet, M. is there to put his foot through it before the stall-holder can pick it up and so save a ha'penny. He has effectively blocked the efforts of the villagers to obtain a supply of electricity; he is an enthusiastic will-shaker, keeping his wretched descendants in fear and trembling of losing his fortune to some charity. Not that there is any charity in M. But it would be a way of tormenting his family.

Whenever I contemplate M.'s activities I thank God that it has never occurred to him to transfer himself and his industry to London or New York. What a tycoon he would have made, what a floater of trusts, exploiter of labour, briber of officials, contriver of shady combinations! Fortunately conditions have made him, on the whole, more useful than pernicious: he has grown rich and disagreeable, but at least, in so doing, he has supplied his fellow men with food and pleasure, a thought which, I imagine, never occurs to him. Were it to do so he would, no doubt, desist from his enterprises at last, and content himself with the old-age pension, which he draws very regularly every Friday, and within which he certainly lives.

EDWARD HYAMS

NORTH LONDON

Beyond the window, the tyre-coloured road deflates
Like a tube at night; the weight of the day—
Red-stuccoed houses, a Victorian baroque that dates
The whole hill with its ugliness, the bay
Windows of dentists, landladies and veterinary surgeons—
Subsides on the tarmac, the trees dusted with white,
And from the huge blocks of flats
People emerge, testing the evening, smelling for the first
Time air, leaves, the flowers that lean on the light.

A ritual almost, this dog-like smelling with enquiring
Noses, cleared of rubber, smoke-stacks and gas,
The walk with wife or pet, continents clearing
Their guilt behind enormous spectacles, a mass
Of words clumsily analysing what everyone is fearing.
Yet, for us as much as for any, this dead-end
Of the day, the air rinsed, acquires a magic
Like our feelings, and what tends
To remain with us is a sense
Of proportion, a sentimentalising of the inherent
Boredom of cities, into the miraculous, the tragic—

A state where anything might happen, the identity
Between what is important and what we may
Become suddenly established—each new day
Something to awake to with alacrity—
And even the limits of this temporary horizon,
A grey hill of shops and flats, restaurants
And villas tempered with limes, does not oppress;
For in the hazy, window-lit valley
Below us, move images our writing fingers may sometimes undress.

ALAN ROSS

The Arts and Entertainment

MR. DONALD WOLFIT

By some mischance I had never until last week seen Mr. Donald Wolfit as Lear, a role in which he is said to overtop all rivals, nor as Brutus. So the opportunity occurring this fortnight at the charming, newly decorated Kings Theatre, Hammersmith, I hastened to take it before it was too late. The note of urgency introduced by these last two words is not due, I quickly add, to any danger that Mr. Wolfit will, as far as I know, stop playing these roles in the near future; it is due only to a natural fear that under the restrictions he deliberately imposes on himself, he is bound, in the nature of art, to play them less and less well.

These restrictions are by now well-known; they fall under two headings. First, his productions, as such, are of noticeably poor quality: it would not matter their being old-fashioned if they were not also unhelpful, any more than it would matter his settings and dresses having all the air of being done on the cheap if they did not distract us by the absence of taste and style. Secondly, in choosing his fellow-actors he seems to suffer from the vanity which Pope ascribes to Addison who could, it will be remembered:

Bear like a Turk no brother near his throne.

Mr. Wolfit carries the Turkish principle much further. Brother? He will bear, it has sometimes seemed, no cousin, no second cousin, no cousin twice removed, no connection even, within measurable distance. I don't wish to over-disparage the hard-working and on the whole commendably audible company who support Mr. Wolfit. But the fact remains that they are ordinary provincial repertory minnows, while he is a large size, a prize Chub. And, of course, the effect of playing the perpetual Chub in a tank of minnows is to diminish their size without increasing his own.

But, by this time one knows that one has to accept these conditions. One goes, if at all, to see not the play, but Mr. Wolfit. And this at least excuses me from having to comment on his new production of *Julius Caesar*. I will only remark of it that, on behalf of the young people now growing up to Shakespeare performances for the first time, it made me sigh for the old Old Vic giving the cycle worthily and soundly in Waterloo Road. Yet in spite of all the obstacles it must be admitted that from the moment Mr. Wolfit enters one can't take one's eyes or one's attention off him. Nor is this only because the production (by Mr. Wolfit himself) is designed to achieve just such an effect, though you may be sure it is. Mr. Wolfit has never aspired to the epithet "unselfish." But the inescapable fact is that however many qualifications one may make, or the actor himself may impose, on his entrance we are in the presence of the great tradition of acting; Brutus is not a part he does well: indeed, it reveals more of his weaknesses than his gifts. Yet he stands there and he speaks, and his mere presence and the pitch of his voice swell and expand the entire emotional atmosphere, broaden it, deepen it, lengthen it: carry us, in short, into a larger and intenser mood, one in which we might really be able to appreciate the experience of Shakespeare. We do not, in this instance, because the part itself does not sufficiently dominate, and in any case Mr. Wolfit on his own level fails to strike the note. He aims for nobility and comes down short in a sort of tired self-pity. He makes the great mistake, too, of trying to exploit his charm and his appearance, which are not his strong points. In a not over-well-fitting white uniform, he marches on to the field of Philippi obviously imagining that he looks like an ardent general jumping down from his jeep into battle (this is a modern dress performance). But all he succeeds in looking like is an out-of-condition band-master coming down from his rostrum after just giving them to his great satisfaction some arrangement—his own perhaps—of the marches of Sousa.

I even wondered at the end of the play whether I wasn't already too late: whether so many years of rubbing shoulders with the second-rate and of complacently accepting the applause of the undiscriminating hadn't already taken their fatal toll. I prepared myself for disappointment in the *Lear* the next night. But the very first entrance here dispels such fears. The first three acts of Mr. Wolfit's *Lear* provide a great theatrical thrill. His king is a magnificent creation, as deeply felt as thought, and acted with the most detailed skill. Every time I have read the play, and every other time I have seen it acted, I have always had to swallow that first scene of the dividing of the kingdom, taking its nasty premise as one takes a dose for the good it will do one later. But with Mr. Wolfit it is quite otherwise. What the very first three minutes manage marvellously to convey is the whole history of the man that has led up to them; so that we are dropped immediately not into a beginning but into a climax. His passionate, wilful, gusty king has reached just exactly that crisis of old age when anything, however wrong-headed, may be expected from him. Second childhood, like first, demands that every whim be translated into immediate action, here, now, on the spot. And unbridled authority has bred in him an unquestioning expectation of immediate indulgence. It is this especially—this violence of the arbitrary will—that Mr. Wolfit places at the centre of his minutely observed portrait of age. His old king may have begun in moments of repose to mutter to himself: he cannot all the time keep his head or his hands quite motionless, but he still commands a demoniac rage at being crossed, a passion for imposing his authority in gross and detail alike. So absolutely to this pitch has Mr. Wolfit tautened up his character that he somehow carries into his delineation of this moment the years' long process that has led him there.

So quickly and surely is this established that whereas other actors begin to tap our tears in the storm scene, Mr. Wolfit has them pricking at the eyelids long before. The uncomprehending bewilderment with which he greets the change of front in his daughters is painful and tragic in the extreme. No hint of the self-pity the actor falls into as Brutus. The edges here are sharp and hard; the feeling springs straight from the situation and the words, but it draws its intensity from the rapid firm preparation which has preceded them.

Unfortunately, after this, on the night when I saw him he lost grip a little. But on the strength of the first two acts, I am inclined to ascribe this to an off-night—something that may befall any actor playing so diverse a number of parts in so many diverse places; and this impression is strengthened by the fact that he found himself from then on fumbling slightly for his words. The tension fell from the beginning of the storm scene (and it was not his cast who were to blame: for both the Fool of Brian Johnson and the poor Tom of Jonathan Meddlings were more than adequate.) But certainly the bad stage arrangements worked hard against him. There was great acting, of course, before there was electric light and stage machinery, but if you are to use these aids they must be used with art. The curtain rises on this scene with Lear standing against a too obviously propped pillar, starkly lighted by one dead white spot from above; and thus he is quite isolated from the lightning and thunder which flashed and crashed like anything "off," in the wings, but somehow had no connection with the stage on which there was no sign of flicker or shiver. Far more effective not to use these devices if they are to be used so badly. Far more effective if he had only been on a bare stage lit by flickering

candles casting their elongated, moving shadows. Once the tension is gone it is almost impossible in this play to screw it up again especially as the action passes to the smaller characters. The mad scenes were still very moving but I missed both a certain pathos and the note of the truly terrible that should flash out in some of the dreadful half sanities (such as Lear's answer to the blind Gloucester: "I remember thine eyes well enough. Dost thou squinny at me?") But since there is no space to anatomise these acts in detail I shall content myself with repeating that on a luckier night and with better stage management I shall expect it to carry me right through.

T. C. WORSLEY

JAMES PRYDE: 1866-1941

IN his introduction to the catalogue for the present exhibition at the Tate, Pryde's biographer, Mr. Derek Hudson, tells us that this is only the third one-man-show of Pryde's work ever to be held. This is reassuring to those of my generation for whom the artist's name evoked only a dingy reproduction seen here or there in back numbers of art magazines. We had *heard* about the man of course; and we admired the "Beggarstaff Brothers" for their posters—the other partner, William Nicholson, was Pryde's brother-in-law and a better artist. But from these reproductions we could see what the poetic content of Pryde's painting was like. It is not surprising that this did not commend itself. The theatrical gloom; the lorn, limited brand of formal stylisation which stretched any architectural feature, whether temple or tenement, upwards—all this dated along with Gordon Craig and Lovat Fraser.

Much more promising was Pryde's obvious connection with Sickert. A man who could paint, in the first decade of the century, with that dry breadth of touch that is not unlike Sickert in his best and most mature moments, such a man was interesting. It was obvious, too, that in his own limited way he was masterly. The carefully plotted design (rather too carefully, it seems now) was enlivened in a thoroughly expert manner by the broad handling, with its controlled fuzzinesses and its evenly spread, opaque mixtures, unmodulated in tone. Then there was a very sound alliance between vision and materials; his coarse-grained canvas is enhanced in its coarseness by being allowed to look through the thin, gritty washes. All this stirred one's interest. Was it possible, one felt, on the announcement of this Memorial Exhibition—was it possible that the unacceptable sentiment of Pryde the illustrator would be eclipsed and nullified by the presence of superlative pictorial qualities?

The answer is not a clear Yes or No. Indeed the present paintings produce, upon one spectator at least, an unforeseen effect; or, rather, a complex of such effects. Admittedly the most immediate reaction I had was to the boldness of design and thin clarity of the handling. But before exploring this pictorial aspect a little more let me first confess what was most surprising to me; namely, the emergence in myself of a sneaking interest in precisely that poetic element to which I should have said (before my visit to the Tate) that I was most certain to be immune. I have said it dates, like Fraser and Craig: so it does. Yet now I find I am not quite so willing to dismiss it as a pose, an essay in second-rate poetics. That neither Pryde's poetry nor his design was, or should ever have been mistaken for, the work of a major artist is certainly my conviction—after, as well as before, this exhibition. But I feel a necessity to acknowledge a certain tiny grain of true poetic perception at the core of this in some ways vulgar imagery of gesticulating façades, draperies, ruins, shadows. I feel there is a gaunt grandeur about Scottish slums which I shall instantly recognise, if ever I go to Edinburgh, because of James Pryde's paintings. The attitudinising ruins are suggestive of rather more than they would be if they were simply the product of a second-rate painter's playing about with derivative cliché forms. I am sure they breathe the flavour of some Northern reality.

To return to Pryde's purely pictorial qualities—the very broadness of design, the clean, workmanlike handling, though they are the things that chiefly commend him they also are the cause of the final wilting of our interest. In *The Red Ruin*, number 31, and *La Casa Rosa*, number 27, the best pictures in the show, the broad layout of rectilinear shapes, in the first, and rectilinear plus ragged ones in the second, raise our hopes to the highest. Here are two schemes, both perfect in balance and extremely fresh and powerful in colour. *The Red Ruin*, in particular, has a sharpness, an economy and a clean precision that are very modern in character. One wonders whether this picture played any part in Mr. Piper's development. Yet soon we find a formal bareness, a lack of intricate depth of feeling. The very "broadness" itself becomes a little banal; we recoil from the ingenuity of the jig-saw puzzle which his design, composed almost entirely of overlaid silhouettes, literally resembles, with its little interlockings of patches of different tone. So, once again, surprised excitement has evaporated and on the way out we notice the immense superiority of Sickert. And the Wyndham Lewis portrait of Ezra Pound asleep seems a power-house of dynamic, plastic ideas after the tasteful, wistful, but flaccid and too decorative works of the late James Pryde.

PATRICK HERON

RADIO NOTES

Perhaps the B.B.C. has put on more obvious stunts than *Round the World in Eight Days*, but if it has I have not heard them. There is, of course, no real analogy between Mr. Wynford Vaughan Thomas's circumnavigation and the events of Verne's novel, which is supposed to have inspired it. The point of the novel is that Phineas Fogg attempted, and performed, the impossible, whereas Mr. Vaughan Thomas is merely sitting in a B.O.A.C. airliner which is taking him there and bringing him back without departing at all from the regular time-tables. That there is material for scores of exciting programmes in long-distance flying is plain enough, and some we have already had; but the method of presentation of *Round the World in Eight Days*, with its £2 wager at the beginning between Mr. Vaughan Thomas and Mr. John Snagge, adds nothing to ordinary feature or documentary techniques. A conversation between Mr. Vaughan Thomas in Darwin and Mr. Snagge in London would have been remarkable twenty years ago; it isn't any longer; we have come to take these technical ingenuities for granted. And it's unlikely that Mr. Vaughan Thomas, for all his enthusiasm and fluency, his very real descriptive gift, is going to tell us, after the three-quarters of an hour or three hours he's spent there, anything we didn't know before about Cairo, Karachi or Sydney. What is lacking in the programme—and must be, unless the aircraft meets with disaster or Mr. Vaughan Thomas unaccountably dries up at the microphone—is the element of surprise. And this, so far from being concealed, is only emphasised by the ballyhoo which invests the programme: the solemn summoning at nine-fifteen each evening of Mr. Vaughan Thomas from wherever he happens to be by Mr. John Snagge in that hearty no-nonsense prep-school-master's tone of his; the official receptions at every port of call. Unless we are to interpret the programme as the record of a feat of endurance on the part of the commentator, it seems to me the programme celebrates nothing extraordinary at all and has little more intrinsic interest than would a programme in which Mr. Vaughan Thomas squatted on a pole for eighty days and broadcast his feelings. That, too, would be a stunt, and only less air-worthy than *Round the World in Eighty Days*. If British Overseas Airways was a private concern, one would suspect the presence in it of a very astute publicity man.

By comparison, Mr. Kenric Higson's feature, *Probation Officer*, in the *Professional Portrait* series, shone like a good deed because of its very unpretentiousness. Simply written, without tricks, it most effectively dramatised the day-to-day work of its subject; it was well produced by Mr. Farquharson Small, and well acted by an anonymous cast whose members never guyed the working-class accents they had to assume. It impressed because of its sincerity.

My first reaction on reading of the Third Programme's series on the life and work of D. H. Lawrence was to imagine the pansy that Lawrence would have written could he have foreseen that twenty years after his death he would be apotheosised by the B.B.C. It turned out to be a very good series indeed. The reminiscences, by Mr. Hopkin and Lady Cynthia Asquith, were admirable in matter and in tone, and Mr. Romilly, on the poetry, and Dr. Leavis, on the novels, gave us excellent and persuasive literary criticism. My only complaint was that their talks were too short. This was especially true of Dr. Leavis's. Isn't it a little absurd, when you get a critic of Dr. Leavis's calibre to the microphone for the first time, talking on a writer about whom he feels strongly and whom he ranks so high, to limit him to twenty minutes? The discussion between Mr. Grigson and Mr. Anthony West on the value of Lawrence today was a stimulating conclusion to the whole series; one only wished that Mr. Romilly and Dr. Leavis could have been in the studio to join in. The weak spot in the programmes was Mr. Potter's feature *The D. H. Lawrence Myths*, which was thin, scrappy and personal in the wrong way. What Lawrence meant during his lifetime to the young came through much more clearly and much more movingly in Mr. Grigson's account of his feelings and behaviour the night that Lawrence died.

WILLIAM SALTER

THE MOVIES

"Marius" and "Le Tempestaire", at the Curzon

Marcel Pagnol's films are perhaps the most eminently exportable items of the French cinema. Many of them are adapted from his own successful stage pieces—Pagnol believes in *théâtre de conserve* (his own term) rather than the cinema—and contain large parts for the most popular of French actors, Raimu. The stories are simple and homely, the minor characters energetic and quaint. *Marius* is part of a trilogy, made in 1932 but only now passed by the Censor for this country, and its main characters reappear in the other parts, *Fanny* and *César*. Here, Marius is a young man of twenty-three, son of a Marseillais café owner, César (played by Raimu), and suffering from sea-fever; Fanny, a local girl, falls in love with him, but realises they will never be happy together and lets him run away on a schooner. The story is supported for two hours by a great many incidents and by minor characters representative of Pagnol mythology—a lecherous middle-aged *commerçant*, a gross cuckold, a vulgar *bourgeoise*, and an ineffectual buffoon. Their antics are comparable to the exaggerated rusticities of *La Femme du Boulanger* and *La Fille du Puisatier*. Two of the main characters, besides, are quite familiar—the robust, explosive and kindly César, and Fanny the innocent coquette. All these have earned Pagnol his reputation for being authentically Gallic (numerous jokes about cuckolds) and regional; but they seem to me as overdrawn and completely superficial as, say, the lower middle-class figures that Stanley Holloway, Jack Warner, Joyce Carey and all have created for British films (greeted in France as equally authentic). Like Sacha Guitry, another prolific French playwright who has used the cinema, Pagnol can be very entertaining at times, but his work suggests a second-rate and fundamentally commonplace imagination.

Since *Marius*, like Pagnol's other films, makes no attempt to conceal its origins—restricted in setting, relying heavily on dialogue, its characters making stage entrances and exits—it would be superfluous to complain that it is not cinema.

But one regrets that the direction was not entrusted to a more inspired craftsman than Korda. By negative and sometimes clumsy handling he deprives the film of much of the charm and lightness that might have carried it through, and too often allows humour to degenerate into music-hall farce. The determined vivacity of the supporting players is rather tiring, but the film is to some extent sustained by Pierre Fresnay's attractive and unassuming performance as Marius.

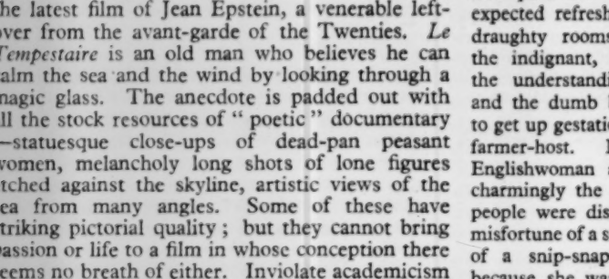
There remains Raimu. Certainly he creates a figure—the sudden tantrums and the seasoned understanding, the coarseness and the dignity in absurdity, it is all there—but he does mar the achievement by overplaying. I think he nearly always did this: undoubtedly a performer of brilliant technique and some endearing qualities, he was required to repeat the same performance in too many films, with results inevitably vitiating for an actor.

In the same programme there is *Le Tempestaire*, the latest film of Jean Epstein, a venerable left-over from the avant-garde of the Twenties. *Le Tempestaire* is an old man who believes he can calm the sea and the wind by looking through a magic glass. The anecdote is padded out with all the stock resources of "poetic" documentary—statuesque close-ups of dead-pan peasant women, melancholy long shots of lone figures etched against the skyline, artistic views of the sea from many angles. Some of these have striking pictorial quality; but they cannot bring passion or life to a film in whose conception there seems no breath of either. Inviolate academicism keeps out the wind and the sea.

GAVIN LAMBERT

"Treasure Hunt," at the Apollo

The Treasure Hunt takes place in Castle Lackrent, an Irish country house impoverished by the extravagant living of the older generation. The new master tries by energetic farming, paying guests and austerity in drinks, betting and luxuries, to pull things round: but only a lost ruby necklace can bring them out of the mess, and the rubies have been put safe a generation ago by a cracked auntie, who can't remember where she put them. It is an amiable comedy, written to a standard West End pattern, but enlivened by many flashes of wit and originality. There are three groups of characters. The Irish servants are intended to exploit the English sentimental view of the Irish as superstitious, inconsequential, glib-tongued eccentrics, but are so warmly and convincingly played by Jean St. Clair, Milo O'Shea, Nora O'Mahony, and John McDarby that they escape from caricature and stand up before us as living people. The older Irish gentry (magnificently played by Marie Lohr and Alan Webb) are spoilt children, petulantly waiting for their biscuits, champagne and cossetting, while carrying on a furtive and hopeless warfare against their nephew, the new owner, who allows them five shillings pocket money only if they behave and pull their weight in the economic drive. The English visitors, not quite out of the top-drawer, deprived of the expected refreshment, subjected to damp beds and draughty rooms, prove to be well-known types; the indignant, haughty battle-axe from Claridges; the understanding old man who loves antiques; and the dumb blonde who likes sex, and is willing to get up gestation tables if that will endear her to her farmer-host. Irene Brown is prodigiously the Englishwoman abroad, and Lewis Casson displays charmingly the art that conceals art. The younger people were disappointing—Anne Leon through the misfortune of a severe cold; Terence Longdon because of a snip-snap diction; and the dumb blonde because she was out of her class. But Dame Sybil Thorndike is perfection itself as the old auntie whose sedan chair, telephone-fitted, carries her in imagination to Honolulu or the mystic East. Dottiness is a delicate subject for comedy: her charm, technique, feeling and sincerity make this mad old lady unembarrassing and endearing. Tanya Moiseiwitsch and Gladys Cobb please the eye, and John Gielgud's direction is as impeccable as we expect it to be.



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Correspondence

CAPITAL INVESTMENT

SIR,—I should be obliged if you would allow me to correct two misinterpretations in the comments which you made in your issue of Sept. 10 on my address to the Institute of Bankers Summer School.

The first of these relates to my attitude to capital investment. You state, that, in order to end inflation, I "proposed cutting capital investment as well as current consumption," and you observe that "this seems a curious way of dealing with a situation which can be put right fundamentally by improved industrial efficiency, and in no other way." On this issue I happen to be in broad agreement with you. The words which I actually used about capital investment were as follows:

> Consumption of the ordinary type has not in fact increased; certainly not at an excessive rate. Nor do I personally regard our rate of capital expenditure in the last few years as excessive, though it contains some extravagant items, and though the total, of course, becomes more than we can afford if we insist on spending so much in other ways.

Some reference to capital expenditure seemed to be required, since the basis of my argument was that our total consumption (of which our consumption of producers' goods, of course, forms part) has been "higher than our current production warrants consistent with making ends meet on international account"; but I should have thought these words would have conveyed that our capital expenditure is not what I wish to cut, least of all that part of it which contributes to industrial efficiency.

I proceeded immediately to indicate where I thought the real excess lay, namely in "the phenomenal growth of public expenditure, especially on the Education Act and on the Health Service, as well as on Defence." On this you avow yourself unable to see "how cuts in the social services would help towards improving the balance of payments unless Professor Henderson really intends them to be only part of a general attack on working-class standards of living—which, we suspect, is precisely what he does mean." That is precisely what I do not mean. I do not believe that ordinary working-class expenditure is excessive. On the other hand, I believe we are approaching a stage at which every £1 million of real resources absorbed by Government expenditure will mean £1 million subtracted from real wages. Accordingly those who insist on treating as sacrosant, and immune from ordinary standards of criticism, any expenditure to which the label "social services" can, however loosely, be attached, are not in my opinion faithfully serving the cause of the maintenance of the British working-class standard of life. No recent development, I would observe incidentally, has had such an anti-egalitarian tendency as the remuneration arrangements under the health scheme, with the stimulus these have given to the raising of incomes in the relatively high-paid professions, extending far beyond the sphere of the medical services. This seems to me, as a non-egalitarian, a desirable long-run readjustment; but, though one of its probable beneficiaries, I find it incongruous at a time of national economic crisis, and in an atmosphere of appeals for a wages stand-still.

As for your difficulty in seeing any connection between the growth of public expenditure and the external deficit, I would ask if you find the difficulty equally great in its application to expenditure labelled "defence" rather than "social services." You have sometimes implied the contrary; and you have even suggested that the improvement in Belgian balance of payments is nothing to be surprised at or boasted of, in view of the lack of social services in that country. However, I would like to guard myself against any suggestion that I regard balance of payments disequilibrium as solely or even mainly the outcome of internal policies.

HUBERT D. HENDERSON

5 South Parks Road,
Oxford.

PROFESSOR BERNAL

SIR,—You don't even need to be a Marxist to see in Moscow why the Soviet Union needs peace. They are building up at an incredible pace the structure of an essentially pacific civilisation. Housing, agriculture, consumption industries are now possible because the basis has been laid in heavy industry.

The first impressive fact about the Soviet Union is that it has become an independent and creative centre of industry, which we have ceased to be, thanks to our dependence on America. There is nothing they won't be able to make or do. In building, of which I know something, they are far in advance of the rest of the world. It is now an all-the-year-round, mass production industry. Equally striking, and matching the material aspect, is the creation of a new kind of culture still in process of formation. Its essential characters are that it is the culture of all the peoples and not of a highbrow élite. At the Peace Congress you could see farmers, trade unionists, artists and scientists from every Republic of the Union, meeting and talking on the basis of intellectual as well as economic equality. It is a positive and hopeful culture; being Marxist it draws on all that is most durable in world culture and at the same time has its roots firmly fixed in the histories of the peoples of the Union.

Now in this new civilisation, war, which has already left a terrible toll, can only appear as an unrelieved disaster. The very successes of reconstruction are clouded by the recollection of personal losses. That the Soviet Union could recover at all after losing seven million of its best people is enough of a miracle. Not one of them, least of all those who direct the State, wants to repeat it. The shadow of war is their only dread and its prevention their most passionate desire.

Our need for peace in the capitalist world is no less but our situation is very different. Our industry is becoming tangled more and more in the network of economic impossibilities; our culture is sinking into a precious state of pessimism. The peoples of the Western industrial States and the far more numerous peoples of the backward exploited regions, can see less and less reason to support a system that only brings unending cycles of misery. It is precisely for that reason that those whose interest is to preserve the system turn to war as a last resort. War, which provides the one means of full productivity and profit is a necessity to the directors of industry. Of course they would prefer to achieve their ends without it but we are not concerned with their consciences but their actions. But war is not a necessity to the peoples of the West and South. In the last resort the issue of war and peace will be settled by whether the power of money expressed in propaganda can balance popular determination not to be dragged into war. That is the importance of the peace movement to-day.

In this general situation I confess I find Critic's remarks about me singularly irrelevant. It is nonsense to treat Tito to-day as the head of a small Power bullied by a larger one, when he is quite openly in the pay of American bankers and offers promising possibilities as a military base. The Soviet notes are intended to bring this home to the Yugoslav people. Concern for Tito to-day is about as liberal as concern for the Sudeten Deutch in 1938. It is precisely by this kind of concentration on diversionary aspects that the main issues can be evaded and the liberal can with a glowing conscience offer no resistance at all to the march of reaction. I know that this is often a temporary weakness: that when the issues are fully faced the good liberal finds himself on the side of the people. But the time to take stock is very short; it is now, rather than in an indefinite future, that we all need to work to preserve peace.

Birkbeck College. J. D. BERNAL

CUSTOMS OFFICIALS IN EGYPT

SIR,—I, as an Egyptian, read with interest Critic's paragraph in your issue of September 10 on Egyptian Customs. I had previously noticed a statement on the same subject in your issue of May 1, 1948. You can rest assured that statements published in the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION are read with great respect by Egyptians owing to the reputation of this Journal for moderation and sincerity, and when I was in Egypt last winter I took the liberty during the course of an interview with His Excellency, the able and experienced Director-General of Customs, of calling his attention to the complaints in question, which are now receiving serious attention as indicated in Critic's second statement.

May I add that the position facing Customs Officials in Egypt is rather difficult owing to increasing attempts of smuggling on a big scale and depriving customs of revenue. There is also a certain amount of prejudice. I was on board a British liner last March when the ship authorities warned passengers desiring to spend a few hours on land in Port Said, that anything they bought would cause them inconvenience, on their return, by Custom Officials, who are described by Critic as "haughty and disagreeable." They were also reminded of the "recent" cholera outbreak, although cholera disappeared from Egypt nearly three years ago. When small traders offered their goods to passengers they were informed of the advice the latter received on board and this caused local resentment.

KYRIAKOS MIKHAIL

UNION RECOGNITION

SIR,—The representatives of Bank staffs and Cine-Technicians draw attention to a state of affairs which is not confined to their industries. My union—the Guild of Insurance Officials—faces to an even greater extent the problem of house unions sponsored by insurance employers. These organisations almost invariably spring into being whenever we attempt to organise the staffs of insurance companies, and there are many more insurance companies than banks.

We make no complaint about the ordinary discouragements faced when organising clerical and technical workers—these are to be expected as part of our work, and we have our methods of dealing with this problem. We do feel, however, that we can, with justice, draw public attention to the unfair methods adopted by certain insurance employers who go to extreme lengths to dissuade their staffs from joining our organisation.

It was in connection with the resolution which the Guild sponsored to this year's Trade Union Congress that the disclosures of the situation in the Banks and insurance companies were made. It was in connection with this resolution that I disclosed at Bridlington by the production of photostat copies of letters, that one insurance employer at least was making it a condition of appointment and employment that the employees involved must relinquish membership of the Guild of Insurance Officials and undertake not to join any other trade union organisation.

At the present time insurance employers are seeking to influence public opinion in their favour, and it seems, therefore, desirable that it should be generally known that these are the people who at the same time take their stand with the Banks and the B.B.C. against granting to their staffs the elementary right of collective bargaining and consultation.

Guild of Insurance Officials. HENRY LEVITT

[This correspondence is closed.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

TRAITORS

SIR,—There runs through Mr. Pritchett's review of Miss West's book, and, seemingly through the book itself, the idea that those who in time of war think the enemy right are a shabby lot, "reckless," "black sheep," guilty of "profound political immorality." Would this apply to Lloyd George and the *Manchester Guardian* and the group who in the Commons cheered British reverses during the South African war?

These men were British which Joyce never was. Both prosecution and defence at his trial were agreed on that. They heartened the enemy from British soil which Joyce never did. Yet none of them was fined tuppence. It must seem strange to many patriotic people that such a fuss should be made over half a dozen of our nationals shouting for the enemy when we are quite ready to employ half a dozen of their nationals to shout for us, and when neither half-dozen has the slightest effect on the issue. Who listened to Joyce? A few out of curiosity, a few for amusement. However much his family may at some time have paraded his British citizenship the fact remains the court found that he had never been a British citizen. The judge called the evidence on that point "overwhelming" obtaining a definite concession of the point from the prosecution.

There remained a little matter of obtaining a pass-

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port by false pretences indicating a fine of 40s. or something like that. This was made the basis of a capital charge. It was held he owed a reciprocal obligation for benefits to which he had become entitled.

Now it is a principle in law that a wrongdoer is not entitled to benefit as a result of his wrongdoing. Joyce was, then, at no time legally entitled to any benefits from a passport fraudulently obtained, and in respect of it owed no reciprocal obligation.

If I falsely obtain a certificate that I am a doctor of music I am under no obligation to play the piano. The certificate would legally confer on me neither obligation nor advantage.

4, Osborne Terrace, Newcastle-on-Tyne. H. A. TRESIDDER

GREECE AND ALBANIA

SIR,—In common with many who have first-hand knowledge of Greece over a period of years I have long differed from your interpretation of events in that much-abused country. I have not the time to take up every issue, nor you the space to print my letters if I did. But your two paragraphs in a recent issue—entitled respectively "To Invade Albania?" and "Are the Greeks Beaten?" go beyond the limits of all fair comment and cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged.

You charge the Greek Government with trying to turn the war in Greece into an international war. Sir, Greece has been at war since 1940. The last thing she wants is to perpetuate the state of war. She seeks means of ending it. And that war can be quickly ended by putting a stop to the repeated aid given to the rebels and the continued violations of the Greek frontier from the North, in both of which respects Albania has for some time been the worst offender. These are not matters of speculation or of assertion, but of proved fact. Despite the opposition of Russia and her satellites a United Nations Balkans Commission does exist for observing frontier incidents. If the writer of your note had taken the trouble to consult the Press on Wednesday, September 14, he would have seen that these observers reported that Greek troops had been fired on from inside the Albanian frontier and that Albanian soldiers took up positions on Greek territory. And these are only the latest in a series of observed violations of the frontier and of international law on the part of Albania. And yet when Greece even contemplates taking some steps to prevent the repetition of these aggressions for the fourth successive year she is accused of "blowing on the fuses of the Balkan powder-keg." That was the sort of language employed by the Fascist papers and their English sympathisers when Haile Selassie had the bad taste to endeavour to defend his country.

The latter part of the second note, mentioning the use of British and American weapons, appears to suggest by implication that Britain and America should cease from supplying arms to the Greek Government. The writer doesn't quite have the courage to come out with that statement. The parallel of the boycott on arms to the Spanish Republican Government (also the legal elected Government of the country) would have been too damning; but that appears to be the implication.

Finally, you ask for the intervention of the United Nations "not in Albania, but in Greece." In the name of all that is logical what sort of justice is this? It is the Greek frontier that is violated. Therefore the United Nations must intervene to teach the Greeks not to dare to complain again.

CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

46 Mount Sion, Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

[This journal has consistently opposed Allied military intervention in Greece, believing that a political settlement could have been reached if we had not supported the Greek Monarchists from the outset. As in the case of China, efforts at mediation were doomed to failure because they were combined with military aid given to one side. Mr. Buckley's case rests on the assumption that the war in Greece is not *primarily* a civil war, but a war stimulated from abroad. This enables him to ignore the social realities of the present Athens regime.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WHITE SOUTH AFRICA

SIR,—Reading the local Press I note that you have the impertinence to criticise the policy of the Union Government.

As an English-speaking South African of British descent I would like to point out that my forbears came to this country many generations ago and by their subjugation by force of the native tribes made it possible for Europeans to settle here and build the nucleus of a *white nation.*

If you, in your own country, were to do something about your own filthy slums where your own people are herded in a way which is a disgrace to any civilised nation, then you would have some reason to point the finger of scorn at others.

Perhaps, if you have the lot of our natives at heart so much you might care to send out some of your sons and daughters to inter-marry with them.

E. H. V. CLARK

P.O. Box 1178, Johannesburg, South Africa.

THE PIDDINGTON ACT

SIR,—Thousands of us who were in Changi enjoyed Sergeant Syd. Piddington's conjuring at the Camp concerts. Scores of us were mildly amused at his "telepathic" show in the huts. He was not very convincing then, but now he is a great success. We all wish him well. But it was silly of him to cross swords with Mr. Kingsley Martin in print. He was never good at patter. I also feel he overdoes the "Changi" business: everyone by now knows that he started his act as a P.O.W. I am glad to see that Mr. Kingsley Martin does not suggest that Major Daltry or any other ex-P.O.W. were conscious accomplices. Such a suggestion is inconceivable to those of us who knew Daltry, and I cannot imagine Piddington would be fool enough to conspire with anyone who was "inside" with him.

Reform Club, Pall Mall. F. DONALD MCINTYRE

SIR,—May I, to right the balance a little, record what I saw as one of the "judges" of the Piddington Act?

Captain Taprell Dorling ("Taffrail") and I, with Mrs. Piddington and a B.B.C. secretary, left the Piccadilly studio just before nine o'clock and were taken by car to the Tower of London. Here, in a room in the Bloody Tower, at about 9.25 Mr. Piddington transmitted to his wife a sentence which was chosen at random by the audience and supervised by Sir Herbert Dunnico and other judges in the Piccadilly studio.

It has been assumed by some sceptics who have spoken to me about this that the "clue" was given to Mrs. Piddington in the "patter" of the act between 9.0 and 9.25. As Mrs. Piddington heard nothing of this—we were talking about the historical associations of the Tower and walking on the battlements, not listening-in to the proceedings in the studio—this cannot have been so. It has even been suggested that a river-tug which, during the thought-transmission, hooted two or three times, was a prearranged "clue"!

If the matter was "faked," then the only alternative would seem to have been that the sentence transmitted had in fact already been agreed on and that, in the studio, Mr. Piddington "willed it on" or deceived Sir Herbert Dunnico, the other judges and the rest of the audience. From what I have been told of the way in which the sentence was chosen this does not seem possible. Numbers were, apparently, asked for at random from the audience, totalled up and the page and line selected in accordance with the result.

I may say that I had never seen the Piddingtons before and have never seen them since. If they do possess this gift and, by much practice, have brought the exercise of it to a high degree of speed and accuracy, I do not see why they should not use it for "entertainment" if they wish to do so.

HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON

ELECTED SILENCE

SIR,—The unworldliness of Mr. Waugh is famous; he is one of our most brilliant writers of fairy tales. But where he carries this unworldliness into argument and even discloses an, of course, harmless inability to read, it is not so beguiling. I did not say I was not a Protestant. To the aberrations of that heresy I am incurably attached, and with all that painful pedantry which every day brings me nearer to the flames. I beg him to leave me my worries. I did not say that certain religious things were meaningless to me. I simply said I did not know what Mr. Waugh understands by them and that I felt disinclined to make him my confessor. The disinclination grows. The notion that Roman Catholic literature cannot be understood by those outside the Roman Catholic church, unless they conform to some prescription or other laid down—and, oh, so variously—by Roman Catholics, is obvious nonsense. I notice Mr. Waugh says my letter is very satisfactory to him. He satisfies himself too easily. That was one of my complaints about *Elected Silence* and his opinion of it. V. S. PRITCHETT

"NO REPLY"

SIR,—Mr. Evan Jack gets both himself and me wrong. His letter in the *Spectator* was not, in its effect on me, emetic: nor were my verses, except apparently in his judgment, splenetic. They were light-hearted doggerel, excited irresistibly by the rhythmical jingle of the last phrase in his letter. Only the sketchiest allusion to context was intended; and context and source were given only because it might otherwise have been difficult to convince readers that there still flourishes among us, contributing to the periodical press, so consummate a master of *fin-de-siecle* prose.

I am glad that Mr. Jack's cellar is full (no doubt thanks, in part, to the enlightened wine-import policy of the present Minister of Food). I hope he may ask me to dinner some time. TOM DRIBERG

DANIEL DEFOE

SIR,—I am writing a Life of Daniel Defoe, and am anxious to include any fresh biographical facts which may have come to light in the course of the past ten or twenty years.

There are periods between the publication of *Robinson Crusoe* and the death of Defoe which are tantalisingly vague. WILLIAM FREEMAN

Langleys, Stock, Essex.

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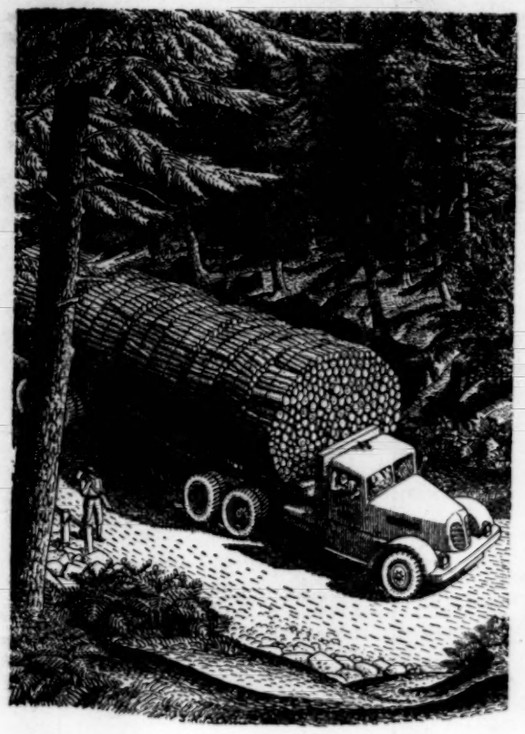

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE sight of the libertine caught at last, fizzing ever more feebly upon the domestic web and settling down, to be consumed at leisure, has always provoked malicious pleasure. It serves the rakes right (we say) when, as they so often do, they catch a Tartar or a sentimental but adhesive simpleton. But the world is a mean place. Malice is satisfied, yet underneath it lies a secret resentment: it is hard when our scapegoats are domesticated, harder still to see freedom vanish, loathsome to discover the less esteemed moralists are right. Woe, therefore, to the captor of libertines. It is, one suspects, largely because she succeeded in holding Byron in the last five years of his life, that Teresa Guiccioli has been so poorly regarded.

In its crude, jealous and vegetative judgments the world is generally right in a low and irrelevant fashion. But we do not live, after all, to provide subject matter for mere opinion. The important discovery of the Guiccioli papers has put the whole story of Byron's last attachment* in a far warmer and richer light. It is extraordinary that these vital documents should have been hidden for so long and very lucky that they have come into the hands of a witty, scholarly, intelligent and sympathetic biographer who, as an Italian, is able to see with a new intimacy into this Italian affair. *The Last Attachment* seems to me not only a just and sensitive book and a valuable addition to the Byron literature; it is one done with such skill that every facet of the intrigue sparkles like a diamond.

Teresa Guiccioli has suffered from summary judgments. Mary Shelley wrote her off as merely "a nice, pretty girl, amiable and with no pretensions." Leigh Hunt, loyal to his farcical wife, a stage British matron who had been snubbed by Teresa, called her "the buxom parlour boarder, composing herself artificially with dignity and elegance." These opinions are not pure examples of the old question: "What can he see in her?" There are grounds enough in Byron's letters to suggest that Teresa cloyed and that what he *had* seen in her he had not seen for long. It must be said that the Marchesa Origo's discoveries do not improve Teresa's character: she was amoral and deceitful; but she was better educated than is usually granted, and if she was often affected and silly, she had that pointed natural intelligence by which silly women so often save their bacon. Her unpublished *Vie de Byron*, written in her old age, appears from the Marchesa's extracts to be gloatingly romantic; but this does not impugn the sincerity of her love for him and indeed, faced as she was by most bitterly wounding things in his correspondence, she seems to have had a selflessness rare in love and, with a little lying here and there, to have put his reputation beyond her own feelings. She had no doubt that Byron loved her "forever"; and our impression is, indeed, that in this relationship Byron intended something in the nature of a real marriage, to the extent at least that he was capable of it.

The only strong argument against this is the Greek expedition; it looks like the escape of a man who has had enough; but the character of Byron is too complex for a judgment as simple as this. The love of the married, or the virtually married, is all the more strongly fixed by their knowledge of the worst as well as the best in their characters, and by the deep emotions aroused by necessity. The things that make against love, so commonly ensure its continuance. Teresa and Byron must have known that conscience, the desire to rehabilitate himself in English public opinion, was the emotion that had come to govern all others in his life. And, again, too many moralists on other peoples' marriages ignore or rashly discount "the merely physical," and there is a kind of conspiracy, in the interests of our higher nature, to believe that this is an attraction and not a satisfaction. The Marchesa Origo is more perceptive:

> Teresa and Byron *suited* each other—as to that there can be no question. Every line of the correspondence confirms this; even in the later phase, when weariness and exasperation had crept in, there remains . . . the pervading sense that whatever else went wrong, *that* remained all right.

If the evenings at La Mira, as Byron wrote in a famous sentence, were long, he was distracted and attracted by Teresa's vitality, her high spirits, a childlike ruthlessness, and (as the older will) would have the prolonged pleasure, perhaps, of pitying her. He knew her vanity and was amused by it. He was amused by the affectations she had picked up in her "*éducation forte*" at the highbrow convent (one imagines a little Catholic Bedales, almost a Prog convent, which the Bishops soon squashed). But above all (and this is a powerful point in the Marchesa Origo's exposition) Byron's love for Teresa lasted so long perhaps because it most resembled the feeling he had for Augusta. To Augusta he indeed wrote:

> She has a good deal of us, too. I mean that turn for ridicule like Aunt Sophy and you and I and all the B's.

She was as silly as Augusta (the Marchesa writes) and amoral, too, in much the same way.

> Like her she could not really believe that anything was wrong that did not cause anyone any pain—and she continued to be kind, even to the people she was deceiving. But Teresa for all this, was only partly like Augusta. She had more staying power, more guts. . . .

and in that surprising way of many women whose sentimentality maddens, more sense.

And Teresa did one important thing for Byron. She took him into Italian life. In Venice, where he met her, he had begun to nibble at it and, like others since, found the company of foreign literary men tedious and the tone of foreign salons formidable. In Ravenna, where he followed Teresa and her mysteriously complaisant husband, he was to be caught up in Italian family life. English friends reproached him for an assimilation the English have often dreaded, and half their disapproval of Teresa springs from the fact she had "Italianised" him. In fact this Italianising was, in her biographer's word, "nourishing" to a man who had lost a country. It also brought him into touch with Italian revolution. The police reports on the celebrated "international revolutionary, atheist and spy, agent of the British Government," with their comic anxiety and misinformation, add a crackle of low comedy to the story; but Byron did play a part in the Romagna insurrection and, with his unlucky gift of bringing ruin on his friends, was to some extent responsible for the losses and exile of Teresa's excellent father and her romantic, admiring brother. The Italian episode was a prelude, a rehearsal for the Greek. It was dilettantism in politics of course; he despised the people if he praised the cause. Prevented, perhaps, by his age from a career of action, Byron lived "as if." And in politics, as in love, there was the conflict which splits romantic natures: he was ruthless, he admired energy and pursued conquest; at the same time he wanted to preserve the distance between himself and the desired object. The distance was the thing.

But what a story the private story is! What characters and intrigues fill it out! We see the old Count, rigid, with red hair and whiskers, walking round his bride of 18 for the first time, candle in hand, "as if to buy a piece of furniture." "Vigorous, rich, intelligent, agreeable in conversation, skilled in seduction, of fine manners and illustrious family," is his grandson's description. Why did this long-headed Renaissance figure invite Byron to his house? Why, though he knew Byron's reputation and knew the scandalous verses which were being sung in the street about the Falcon turned Cuckoo overnight, did he hold his blow? He borrowed money from Byron. Was he really selling his wife? Where was his jealousy—for he spied upon them continually? We must seek not for the common human feeling but, as Balzac would have said, for the dominant passion. Avarice, the Marchesa thinks, must have governed him; he had that vice, so honoured in England but so mistrusted abroad—eccentricity. His wife was property like anything else, an investment. He could allow her to go to bed with Byron; what he could not allow, what brought the scandal into the open, was that Teresa did not use the influence of the alcove to help her husband's financial ends. "He could not forgive that, as far as Byron was concerned, she was disinterested." How extraordinary are the morals of the affair; for the adulterous lovers—adultery was a word Teresa did not like—were able to put the Count, an experienced intriguer and credited even with two assassinations, in the wrong. And there is the extraordinary sight of Byron moving with her to her own family after the separation, and being treated with the respect due to the virtuous.

The letters of Byron to Teresa are dull and even conventional, where those he wrote to his friends at the same time are full of the old spirit, the old cynicism and bravado, as always going out to the attack to stave off the ridicule his vanity dreaded. The cad wrote better than the lover:

> La G's instructions are rather calculated to produce an *éclat*, and perhaps a scene, than any decent iniquity . . . to go to Cuckold a Papal Count, who, like Candide, has already been the death of two men, one of whom was a priest, in his own house, is rather too much for my modesty when there are several other places at least as good for the purpose. . . . The Charmer forgets that a man may be whistled anywhere before, but that *after*—a journey in an Italian June is a Conscription, and therefore she should have been less liberal in Venice, or less *exigent* in Ravenna.

But Byron's Italian was shaky, he was at a loss before foreign customs; his innate conventionality comes out as it is to do again and again: if the libertine worships anything it is the conventions. It is he who is the moralist of the affair—a matter which seems to surprise his present biographer. She would have expected the girl from the convent to have more scruples. To us this must seem a curious expectation, and even more when we recall the Calvinist belief in doom which Byron carried with him. "I am a finished man," he said during their liaison: under the irony of the reformed rake, the captured husband, there is something deeper. He was predestined to die. He would fulfil the grim requirement of "dying at the right time." And physically, at 36, he was old; he had decayed. The brain, they said, when he died at Missolonghi, was that of an old man.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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ROBERT HALE

WHY MR. GUNTHER MATTERS

Behind Europe's Curtain. By JOHN GUNTHER. *Hamish Hamilton.* 15s.

I have known fellow-correspondents who would splutter at the very mention of John Gunther. "Blows in here for a couple of days, picks the brains of a couple of ambassadors, is seen by one or two big shots, and off he goes on the next plane, an expert on this country, and with editors and publishers falling over themselves to pay him large cheques." Sour grapes of course; and yet that is almost precisely how Gunther goes about his job. Having read through *Behind Europe's Curtain*, I hardly remember anyone below ambassadorial or ministerial rank with whom Gunther talked. He does not even go through the motions of visiting farms or factories, which is a drawback and leads him into sweeping assertions like this one about Poland: "Never once in Warsaw did we see a red flag, a photograph of Stalin, or the kind of Soviet banner that is common elsewhere in eastern Europe. These simply do not exist." If he had gone into any factory in Warsaw, he would have found both red flags and pictures of Stalin. The deduction that they "do not exist" is a guntherism of the worst sort. Altogether, in Poland, Gunther listened for four hours to the talk of the press chief, General Grosz, and I can just see pro-Soviet Grosz, with his tongue in his cheek, saying to Gunther: "Our land reform is prodigious, but it is quite a different thing from forcing people into *kolkhozes*," and then adding (knowing full well that Gunther is a very busy man) "You must read the great speech Minc made yesterday"—a very long and highly technical affair.

Gunther gets an awful lot of things wrong: "Poznan and Gdynia were all but obliterated." Gdansk, yes, but not Poznan or Gdynia. In the first six months of 1946, he further says, the population of Warsaw grew from 50,000 to 375,000—not realising that the latter figure includes the 250,000 people of Praga, opposite Warsaw. One could go on almost indefinitely. A touch of unconscious humour is provided by the following:

> We would have met the President, the Premier, and so on, had we stayed longer. But the Poles have a touchy pride, and in a quite nice way, they felt that they should punish us mildly by not giving us too many interviews because our visit was hurried. This was frankly put to us, and I found it very interesting.

That this was another typical Grosz leg-pull, I can clearly see. But Grosz certainly did a beautiful job, for of no country in the East does Gunther speak with such admiration as of Poland. Of Czechoslovakia, on the other hand, he speaks with the deepest loathing, painting, in the process, a picture of hunger and misery which struck me as highly coloured, to say the least. He had visa trouble with the Czechs, Premier Zapotocky was "shy and almost inarticulate" in speaking to Gunther (which suggests that he couldn't be bothered); but, more important still, Gunther was deeply devoted to the memory of Jan Masaryk, and what he saw in Prague annoyed and offended him. None of this is, however, an excuse for the numerous inaccuracies and the sweeping judgments he makes on Czechoslovakia, after only the briefest of visits. For instance, "Gottwald is largely a shadow man." Which is just silly. Nor does Gunther much care to be bothered with economic intricacies.

And so Gunther, in the summer of 1948, "covered" Italy, Turkey, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia; at second-hand he adds a chapter on Bulgaria and Rumania, plus some additional pages on Austria (incidentally, among the best in the book), and even some tit-bits on France and England. One does not have the impression that he enjoyed writing this book as much as he must have enjoyed writing *Inside Europe*. There he dealt with picturesque, villainous, flamboyant, melodramatic figures—Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, Horthy, Dollfuss, Mussolini, Carol and Lupescu, and so on; besides he dealt with many countries—such as Germany and Austria—with which he was thoroughly familiar. In unfamiliar Eastern Europe the only picturesque figure Gunther saw was Tito; for the others, he sometimes has to fumble painfully for adjectives—all these Communist leaders are so much of a muchness—and when all else fails, "able" has to do. Thus, Cyrankiewicz is bald and "very able"; Kidric "was described to me as the ablest man in Yugoslavia"; Bebler is "attractive and very able," and Rankovic, too, is "extremely able."

Yet, for all its carelessness and "unscholarliness," Gunther's book is important, in much the same way as *Inside Europe* was important twelve years ago. Except in Czechoslovakia, where his approach is almost purely emotional, he tries very hard to understand what is really happening in Eastern Europe. He finds that in Greece, for instance, there is mighty little room for American self-righteousness; Turkey, a miserable and thoroughly undemocratic country, he says, suffers acutely from "façaditis"; if Anna Pauker is a rather terrifying female, she has a pretty good case for trying to turn a backward and proverbially corrupt country like Rumania into something much less amiable to the tourist, but much more efficient from the standpoint of the Rumanian people. He makes allowances for the fact that Rakosi spent fourteen *years* in prison, and also tries to see what economic advantages, if any, all these countries derive from their new systems. While admiring Mindszenty, he understands that the Cardinal was, above all, an avowed political enemy of the regime, that his case was essentially a political and not a religious one, and that, though scarcely a conspirator, he indulged in a good deal of "conspiratorial talk." Gunther also notes that the American press gave a very one-sided picture of the case, and that no American paper gave an adequate idea of the *Yellow Book*, concerning Mindszenty's black-market dealing and the manner in which he pestered the American Legation, rather to the latter's embarrassment. More important still, he remarks that all these countries have a horror of war, except the "secret reactionary groups who exist in all countries of Central and Balkan Europe. They are the only Europeans we met who actively want a war . . . to be fought by Americans."

If *Inside Europe* was a vitally important book because, at the time, it did more than almost anything else to make America thoroughly conscious of the danger of Nazi Germany, *Behind Europe's Curtain* is almost equally important because it explains very convincingly that, given the local conditions, Socialism in Eastern Europe is part of an inevitable historic process, that it has its good, as well as its vile features, has a considerable following, and is not, in itself, bellicose. In short, neither the "new democracies" nor Russia herself, with her relative technical weakness, need be considered probable or, worse still, inevitable aggressors, which Nazi Germany certainly was. Gunther's conclusion is that "if Russia and the United States fight, it will mean that Hitler, even in death, will have won the war." As a good example of how it is possible for Russian and American officers to co-operate, he quotes Vienna; here both sides behave in a tactful, cool, and level-headed way. And the inference is: if it is possible in Vienna, why not, eventually, everywhere?

Altogether, Gunther does not hesitate, at any time, to follow lines of thought which must be unpopular, and which are not at all in keeping with the current propaganda lines of the American—or British—press. Despite many faults, this book has two immense virtues: objectivity and intellectual honesty. These qualities not only no longer exist in Eastern journalism, where everything is "party line"; but they are also very far to-day from being universal in Western journalism. Although this is far less good and informative a book than *Inside U.S.A.* or even *Inside Europe*, it still belongs to a great journalistic tradition, which is, unfortunately, to-day, in danger of dying.

ALEXANDER WERTH

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THE BODLEY HEAD

THE TEST OF POETRY

The Tell-Tale Article. By G. ROSTREVOR HAMILTON. *Heinemann.* 10s. 6d.

The Well-Wrought Urn. By CLEANTH BROOKS. *Dennis Dobson.* 10s. 6d.

Mr. Hamilton's small book and Mr. Brooks's large one are both directed to the same end—the better understanding of poetry. Mr. Hamilton studies modern poetry; Mr. Brooks considers ten poems of poets ranging from Shakespeare to Yeats. While his scope is wider than Mr. Hamilton's, his intention is narrower. It is this which saves his elucidations from the pitfalls of Mr. Hamilton's bolder enterprise. Although I should not wish to stretch the distinction, these two interesting studies may be said to dramatise the difference between English and American criticism at this time. Professor Brooks is by way of becoming a leading academic spokesman for the "New Criticism" (now some twenty years old) in America. But he does not always recognise the dangers of academicism inherent in the "contextual" method. The result, as in his over-ingenious study of the "babe" imagery in *Macbeth*, can sometimes be a disturbingly genteel version of the "New Criticism."

Mr. Hamilton is clearly indebted to some of the same masters as is Mr. Brooks. They are I. A. Richards and William Empson, both English, and both responsible for many of the refinements of verbal analysis which Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Brooks employ in common. But Mr. Hamilton is also responsive to another stream in English criticism, one less stylish just now, but with its own excellences. It can be described only imperfectly as "Arnoldian." It is a kind of criticism best practised in this country by the very person who is the object of its attack by Mr. Hamilton—T. S. Eliot. It is a criticism which at its best is commodious, ethical and legislative in its temper; at its worst, pontifical and over-regulatory.

In *The Tell-Tale Article*, Mr. Hamilton displays the best and the worst features of this criticism. At least one of his three essays on modern poetry, the title-piece, a brilliantly provocative attack on the diction of contemporary poetry, is one that everyone interested in that subject will want to read. Mr. Hamilton starts with a small but significant observation: he notices that the definite article is represented in modern poetry by a ratio of roughly a little over 8 per cent. to that of roughly a little over 4 per cent. in poets from Spenser to the Restoration. In the first group, Eliot and Auden average about 10 per cent. each; in the second, Donne averages only 1 per cent. The percentages vary, of course, in the individual work of any poet. Descriptive "Nature" poetry, for example, shows a steadily high frequency of the definite article throughout the centuries.

The frequent use of "the," Mr. Hamilton points out, gives particularity to the image, and also imposes on the reader, a sense of recognition, of participation in a shared experience which he may not, in fact, possess. His analysis of Auden's well-known reliance on this device is devastating. For example, "In *Spain* the definite article occurs 151 times in 744 words—20 per cent. The significance of this is obvious. The poem is largely a succession of calculated phrases without any backbone of verbs: the degeneration of syntax could hardly go further."

Eliot, too, although "he can use the verb for a vivid stroke of imagery" uses a preponderance of nouns and adjectives, with intransitive verbs "in a high ratio to transitive, and the participle worked too hard." In addition, while preferring the particular image to the general, Eliot has few relative clauses, "choosing rather to build up to a succession of phrases or main sentences" and over-loading the later poetry with abstract expressions. While this seems a fair enough description of Eliot's syntax, it is inconsistent to charge Eliot with over-abstractness and particularity at the same time. What is more serious, however, is that Mr. Hamilton's conclusions are entirely too sweeping: "Eliot, it must be said, has done serious damage in his poetry to the structure of the English language." And the only defence for this poetry, a poetry whose beauty is not entirely lost even on Mr. Hamilton, is that it reflects "the vision of a disintegrated world, and it is an exaggerated vision. For Eliot . . . is out of touch with the active virtue and strength which even to-day survives in ordinary men. . . . It is . . . the failure of the sense of man's greatness."

Since Mr. Hamilton writes with unusual simplicity and grace, the unwary reader may fall into the singularly efficient trap his argument has constructed: he may proceed from an acceptance of the observation about Eliot's practise to an acceptance of the assertions about Eliot's vision. The high presence of the definite article *may* be a coincidental feature of what Mr. Hamilton says is Eliot's low valuation of man. But to assert that there is a *causal* connection between syntax and a philosophic conception of man's fate is nonsense. For while syntax may reveal the intensity or the slackness with which a poet grasps his materials, in itself it tells us nothing about the nature of those materials.

Aesthetically, the inadequacy of Mr. Hamilton's analysis is that he is not sufficiently sensitive to the magical effects Eliot gets by incantation. Naming (Eliot's reliance on nouns) is a primitive technique for dealing with one's environment—as in ritual magic. It is a triumph of the poetic imagination that Eliot has been able to use this technique to order complex intellectual experience. In the end, one feels that Mr. Hamilton has unfairly reserved the premise animating all his essays for the last page where he deplores the modern poet's "too easy acceptance of a contemporary leader—an innovator of genius, perhaps, like Eliot—whose personal gifts may be very different from his own."

Mr. Brooks, whose procedure *seems* empirical, is specially concerned to plead for "normative judgments" in criticism, a term he appears to equate with "absolute standards" or "universality." This identification is a naive one: it is quite possible to make "normative judgments" about six oranges or six poems. But this will not give us "universal" or "absolute" standards either about all oranges or all poems. When Mr. Brooks forgets his concern for the fate of the humanities, when he is willing, for the moment, not to allow his conception of "paradox" as the test of poetic structure to do all the work of criticism for him, then he is one of the most rewarding of contemporary critics. Anyone who wishes to sample his power to make a new reading even of poems worn thin by exegesis might start with his delightfully sly "The Case of Miss Arabella Fermor," a study of *The Rape of the Lock*. Even Pope, I think, would have been amused.

VIVIENNE KOCH

MUCH ADO ABOUT LITTLE

Economic Calculation in the Socialist Society. By T. J. B. HOFF. *Hodge.* 21*s.*

The question whether rational economic calculation is possible in a socialist society as a guide to pricing of goods and services and to the *optimum* distribution of resources among the various branches of economic activity has already given rise to a vast number of books and articles. This long-winded volume, translated from the Norwegian, goes over the familiar ground, with many citations from previous writers and with not much new to say. Arguments of this kind easily become wearisome because of the constant shifting of the assumptions on which they are conducted. If a "socialist society" is taken, as it often is, to mean a society in which all economic activity is completely controlled by a single centralised authority, assigning to each individual his occupation and to each production unit what it is to produce, and fixing both incomes and prices in an entirely arbitrary way, there is really no more to be said. But does anyone really stand for such a society? Every Socialist I know of, while holding that some goods and services must be produced in accordance with the *collective* requirements of the community (*e.g.* schools, health services, armaments, etc.), also takes it for granted that for the rest the aim will be to give the individual consumers what they prefer, except for the prohibition of some definitely noxious products and the pricing up or down through taxes or subsidies of some others of which it is thought socially desirable to reduce or increase consumption. The question, then, is whether, on this basis, a socialist society will be able to find any means of discovering what the consumers do actually want.

Mr. Hoff, after a great deal of argument, on the whole thinks not; but why? It is true enough that in a socialist society incomes will not be left wholly to the higgling of the market, and that the labour-cost of production will become, in part at any rate, a socially controlled cost instead of a cost determined by the relative pulls of the parties concerned. But this is surely a more, and not a less, rational basis than exists in any known capitalist society. It is also true that, if a central authority controls the supply of money and the level of capital investment, it will be in a position to fix rates of interest (if there are any) at what levels it pleases. But, once more, is such a procedure less rational than the forces which determine interest rates in actual capitalist societies? Rents of land, too, will be controlled charges if there is only one landowner—the public—but is a controlled charge less rational than one which is uncontrolled by considerations of social benefit?

Essentially, the whole wearisome argument rests on assuming a kind of absolutely competitive society in which there are no vested interests, no pressure groups, and no frictions—and in which considerations of welfare are left wholly out of account, except for the assumption that an undefinable "maximum" of total production means maximum total welfare—and then showing that

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a socialist society could not yield the ideal results postulated as flowing from such an imaginary system. Of course it could not; but that does not mean that it could not do a great deal better than any actual capitalist society, provided that it was run by democrats who set out to give individual consumers as far as possible what they wanted, and not by totalitarian maniacs with an irrational preference for guns, or concentration camps, to the good things of life. Mr. Hoff's arguments, like so many others in this field, are valid only against the idiots who have attempted to construct perfect models of centralised, collectivist economic systems and to claim for them perfect "rationality." Who wants a perfectly rational economic system, anyway? All sensible economic policies are based on considering human factors and values of a non-economic as well as of a strictly economic kind. "Economic rationality," in the sense in which the theoretical economists often talk about it, is a long way distant from true reasonableness. Of the latter, a socialist society will have as much, and no more, as the good sense of its leaders in using their experts makes possible. There is no earthly reason why this should not be a great deal more than the irrational distribution of incomes and property under capitalism allows.

G. D. H. COLE

NEW NOVELS

Storm and Echo. By FREDERIC PROKOSCH. *Faber.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The Memoirs of a Shy Pornographer. By KENNETH PATCHEN. *Grey Walls Press.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Journey of Simon McKeever. By ALBERT MALTZ. *Gollancz.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

The Arabian Bird. By CONSTANTINE FITZ-GIBBON. *Cassell.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Three of the novels under review are American. The first is pretentious but impressive. The second is affected and silly. The third is slightly sentimental and agreeable. They are very different, yet seen beside *The Arabian Bird* they are all related to one another. How different is the flavour of the English novel! Bred in a different climate, among the cold mists of Oxford and the gloom of London, this product of a soft-currency area seems to belong to another world.

Storm and Echo is an account of a journey through equatorial Africa, and if you can imagine a novel written by Henry Miller on a plot supplied by Rider Haggard, you will get a rough idea of what it is like. The object of the journey is a mysterious mountain, Nagala, which the natives won't talk about, but which the four white men who make the journey are willing to go through hell and high water to reach. Each of the four has some inadequate ostensible reason for making the journey, and while it is hinted (rather heavily) that they are in search of the Ultimate, it is difficult to avoid the suspicion that they have been reading *She*, and are proceeding in hopes.

Now as to style. Here is Henry Miller: (*The Colossus of Maroussi.*)

> The earth grows wan and weird, defertilised, dehumanised, neither brown nor grey, nor beige, nor taupe, nor ecru, the no colour of death reflecting light, sponging up light with its hard, parched shag and shooting it back at us in blinding rock-flaked splinters that bore into the tenderest tissues of the brain and set it whimpering like a maniac.

And here is Prokosch:

> Everything was part of the sun. The sun governed everything. It pierced, purified, brightened, intensified, drained, paralysed, killed. It cast an oblique radiance on this horrible world. It cast a coppery powder on rock, reed and sand. It was pervasive, protean, a sting, an embrace, an aura; a scent of potassium, a serpent's hiss, a grinding of teeth, a rumbling of rocks.

Yet although the plot is embarrassing, and Miller makes Prokosch appear merely painstaking, something impressive emerges. The negro characters are depicted with sympathy; they are touching, dignified, and real. In his less high-pressure passages Prokosch is capable of a genuine lyricism, of pathos, and of sharp observation. And while it is true that these qualities get a bit lost in the jungle, the very reiteration, the piling-up of effects, of which this literary jungle is composed, produce a book which, while it is certainly pretentious, is not phoney, and not without force.

The Memoirs of a Shy Pornographer is also pretentious, but if *Storm and Echo* is occasionally embarrassing, this book is downright shaming all through. The idea was a good one, a satire, as the publishers say, "on contemporary American society, and particularly on the methods of building literary reputations." God knows they need satirising, but Mr. Patchen's method is a painful mixture of literary slap-and-tickle, coterie jokes, and nylon-ad. surrealism. There is a kind of comic turn which, done at a party about three in the morning, gets applause from one's friends. They would not, however, wish to see it among professional variety acts, and it would have been a kindness on the part of Mr. Patchen's friends to have pointed this out to him

Albert Maltz, who wrote, among other things, the screenplay of *The Naked City,* is clearly one of the less Sunkist Hollywood writers, and he has kept his simple and pathetic tale free of sentimentality, or at least of unacceptable sentimentality. Simon McKeever is an inmate of a Home for the Aged who, crippled by arthritis, hitch-hikes several hundred miles to get it cured. He fails, but there are compensations. That's about all, but I have found this book to be not only, like its hero, extremely likeable, but also remarkable in fixing Simon as a social type. He is an American working-class radical, with a culture and a tradition based upon Walt Whitman, Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and the I.W.W., and Mr. Maltz suggests this background with great understanding and skill.

The Arabian Bird is much more difficult to put one's finger on. It has the rather sad, lonely, excluded, maliciously observant flavour of the English first novel, with its typical places—the prep. school ("playboxes and iron-shoed stampedes down corridors"); Oxford ("the wan street lamps half-shrouded by the cold mists .... Oliver hurried along the streets past the muffled figures of his fellow undergraduates"); and London ("It would be pleasant to run into some man he had known and liked, in a pub, say, or in the Café Royal"). But this is a good one, spoilt a little by a restraint which has made two of the principal characters, Charles and Louise, rather dull. The other characters are better, less "carefully observed," more spontaneous and lively. Mr. Fitz Gibbon has done some extremely good scenes, chiefly when, as in a scene in a disreputable drinking club, he has taken the leash off his gifts of high spirits, irony, and graceful burlesque.

J. D. SCOTT

CHANGING THE SPOTS

Popcorn on the Ginza. By LUCY HERNDON CROCKETT. *Gollancz.* 15*s.*

"Oh, what a wonderful morning," says General MacArthur. "Oh, what a wonderful day," echo the Zaibatsu leaders. And the chorus is taken up by G.I.s and Main Street girls teaching Farmer Ishimoto and Merchant Yokoyama the American way of life. Many of them went to Japan, thinking of Bataan and Okinawa. They expected "sullenness, treachery, and bitter resentment." They were met by attempts "to get buddy-buddy" by the Japanese, by subtle, unfamiliar courtesy. Lucy Herndon Crockett, who spent 18 months in Japan as a member of the American Red Cross, makes many interesting observations, sometimes superficial, sometimes profound, but generally bright.

She obviously has her own doubts about the surface harmony. She asks whether the Japanese are "practising 'democracy' or hypocrisy." One story she quotes made her doubt whether it was "democracy." An American correspondent in 1947 interviewed a Japanese General who was witness for the International Tribunal. Dying of cancer, the ageing warlord had nothing to lose by speaking frankly. The old general came right out and stated that in his opinion those Japanese now working with the Occupation would, when the whole business was over, be regarded with contempt by other Japanese as collaborators.

The author, whilst praising some of the American blue-prints for changing the spots of the Japanese leopard, is highly sceptical about the good-time lives of those who are supposed to affect the transformation. They fill the best hotels, they take over the best buildings, they have generous monthly rations of whisky and nylons and slip out in the middle of the morning for a milkshake and a bag of popcorn on the Ginza (Tokyo's Fifth Avenue). American women "stream out of office buildings, trot—sublimely indifferent—through crowds of downcast Japanese who seem to melt from their imperious path." Maisie may be only a humble little file clerk back home in Arkansas but "in Tokyo she's a queen." The occupying army, civilian and military, must have relaxation and the most "colorful sights that fifteen hundred miles of beauty-packed archipelago and a thousand or more years of culture have to offer has been neatly processed and packaged for the benefit of Allied personnel." Off they go, these men and women from the New World, armed with Kodaks, Leicas and Speed Graphics to visit such photogenic objects as the Hairy Ainus, Nara's famous Buddha, Mikimoto Pearl fishing, and to enjoy a streamlined programme through the ruins of Hiroshima. And in this easy-going life in Japan, there appear to be many Madame Butterflies. One waitress told Lucy Crockett, "American men like Japanese girls *very* much. Say Japanese girls no all time yappity-yappity-yap."

This is the lighter side of *Popcorn on the Ginza.* But the author noticed other things too; the hunger and the daily scrounging for food which is the main topic in Japanese homes, the shortage of housing, the black market's "stratospheric prices," the scavengers who pick up the "Occupation manna" of cigarette stubs and tin-cans. One day she bravely attempted a small mass observation to find out what the conquered thought of the conquerors. The result was not flattering; one said that the rush around suggested that "Americans lacked dignity to an almost uncivilised degree." Another asked whether the Americans "had the capacity for thinking deeply, or were we merely as frivolous as we often appeared." A boy in the Kobe Oriental Hotel, when asked whether he had seen a particular officer, replied, "Very sorry. Do not know. All Americans look same. Big noses all same. Round eyes all same. Brown hair thick like dogs all same."

Presiding over the complex administration which aims at making the Japanese, from the bell boy to Emperor Hirohito, fit for Western democracy, is General MacArthur. He is "daily more firmly established in a sort of celestial sphere along with other gods who concern themselves with the nation's welfare." Japanese Christians thank him for his goodness and apologise for the sins of their military clique. Others write to him in their own blood asking to join the American Air Force. Meanwhile, Emperor Hirohito stops to speak to ordinary human beings and confesses "that the rice shortage has forced him to forsake that customary Japanese diet for noodles, potatoes and dumplings."

In spite of her frequently facetious tone, Lucy Crockett honestly brings out the gap between "them" and "us" in post-war Japan. It goes deeper than the difference between victor and vanquished which history shows is only a matter of who fights whom and when. It is a gap between two totally different civilisations. The Americans, seemingly unconscious of the deeper pull of a long history and impressionable to a degree, have paid little attention to the social forces in Japanese society. They may believe that they can impose democracy on Japan by a few years of Americanisation. But I should not be surprised if the Japanese themselves regarded it as only a frothy interlude in their history.

DOROTHY WOODMAN

FOLLY OF THE THEATRE

No Star Nonsense. By PETER COTES. *Rockliff.* 12s. 6d.
Shakespearean Scene. By HERBERT FARJEON. *Hutchinson.* 12s. 6d.
First Nights and Noises Off. By BEVERLEY BAXTER. *Hutchinson.* 21s.
We'll Hear a Play. By J. C. TREWIN. *Carroll & Nicholson.* 12s. 6d.

Under his provocative title Mr. Peter Cotes, a young actor turned producer, has written a perfectly sensible level-headed book in which he discusses from a practical angle most of the problems which crop up in any contemporary discussion of our theatre and its future. Drawing freely as it does on his personal experience in the last few years, *No Star Nonsense* is less like a book than a conversation. Mr. Cotes is not a theorist and he has nothing particularly new to say. But he writes straightforwardly and directly, laying out for us a general view which we may take as fairly representative of a young generation who take their theatre seriously.

In Mr. Cotes's scale of values the play—and therefore the dramatist—is the most important element. Second comes the producer whose business it is to discover exactly what the dramatist means and wants, and then to set about achieving exactly that, neither more nor less. The actors are the producer's colleagues in this attempt to realise the dramatist's intentions, but subordinate to his leadership; fourth in the scale of importance come designers, lighting and all the other devices which may help the project. Obvious, you may think? Yet the order which he gives is by no means the invariable order. There are producers who think themselves more important than the text (and with some of the scripts they have to handle, who can deny it?) and there are many ardent stage enthusiasts who are more interested in the whole paraphernalia (they tend to lump it altogether and term it "theatre") than they are in the quality of the plays themselves. Then there are those actors and managements and audiences, too—plenty of all three!—whose main interest is in the fortunes, the private lives or the drawing power of certain star personalities.

It is against this interest—against the "personality actor," type-casting and the star system—that Mr. Cotes launches his main offensive, setting up as an opposition ideal the Group Theatre. This is nowhere defined very exactly, but we get a good idea of what he means by it as we go along. Briefly, it is a continuation of the methods and aims of such theatres as the Moscow Arts, the Abbey and such-like. It is easy enough to demonstrate that the work done by such theatres is more rewarding both for audiences and actors than the average commercial enterprise—on the one condition that both audiences and actors are also taking their theatre seriously. What is less easy to believe is that group theatres of this kind can just happen for the wanting. Doesn't it in such case depend upon the accident of a dynamic personality appearing at the right moment—a Stanislavsky, an Antoine, a Granville-Barker, a Lady Gregory? Without such "stars," if we may borrow that term, it is possible to imagine group theatre veering towards the dreary. I confess that I cannot suppress a shudder of apprehension, for instance, when I find Mr. Cotes speaking of people interested in his kind of theatre as "groupers."

Doubtless it is true that our present scheme of things is very wasteful; under it artistic achievement is only a haphazard by-product of "the entertainment business." On the other hand it is sentimental to overlook the fact that the public for "serious" theatre will always be a minority; and it is inhuman to despise all those incidental elements in the attraction of the stage which may be collectively excused as being the necessary Folly of the Theatre. Extravagance of all kinds is the natural flower of the footlights; under any economic system the theatre will be, let us hope, one of the means of indulging that natural ebullience in the human creature which systems of all kinds are always too ready to disregard. But I must not leave the impression that Mr. Cotes is narrowly doctrinaire. He throws his net wide; as an example some of his best pages are directed to managements and house managers whom he usefully reminds that, if the theatre is to compete with the cinema, they must really be a little less cavalier in their treatment of their patrons.

In another of his chapters he addresses some moderate and modest advice to the critics. Had he had the book handy, I imagine that the Shakespearean criticisms of the late Herbert Farjeon, now published under the title, *The Shakespearean Scene*, might have served him as a model of what he wants critics to be. The problem for most critics nowadays—apart from those who have been turned by their editors into gossip-columnists—is the problem of space. In these critiques Herbert Farjeon shows us how to use a commonly very small allotment to the largest possible effect. He was not able to spread himself lengthwise but each of his criticisms spreads downwards in the mind because each of them is closely packed and founded on a deep knowledge of Skakespeare which is not pedantic, and a deep love which is not idolatrous. He had his hobby-horses—the Shakespearean stage and the boy-actor—but he rides them rarely and he rides them well. To convey both what an acted performance looked like, and at the same time to imply what it should have looked like, and to do both in the small compass at Farjeon's disposal, was a considerable feat of craftsmanship, well worth reviving.

We do not need to be reminded of the methods and manners of Mr. Beverley Baxter and Mr. J. C. Trewin; they are happily still with us to remind us themselves in their respective columns week by week. *First Nights and Noises Off* and *We'll hear a Play* (optimistic title these days!) are collections of their dramatic criticisms over the post-war years. RICHARD LISTER

THE CIVILISED ENGLISH

Late Saxon and Viking Art. By T. D. KENDRICK. *Methuen.* 32s. 6d.

Although he has peers in Scandinavia, there is no one in this country who can challenge Mr. Kendrick as the foremost critic of a remote but delightful realm of English art. Just before the war he published *Anglo-Saxon Art to A.D. 900*, and now he develops the same story until it reaches a slow, sad ending with the submergence of the native genius under the waves of the Norman Conquest.

The main subject of the earlier volume was the mingling of the Celtic tradition, that had first blossomed in the La Tène art of the Iron Age, with the strange, barbaric animal styles of the Teutonic peoples, and the influence on them both of a renascent West European classical culture. The fortunes of this mixed art remain the principal interest of the second volume, but the story is vastly complicated by further Continental influences and by contacts with the Danes and Norsemen who came first as marauders, and later to settle.

Under Alfred the Great, heavy, staid forms from the Carolingian classical styles had been imposed upon the graceful and fantastic interlace, vine-scroll and twining animal patterns of Celtic and Anglo-Saxon art. Later a new classical influence made itself felt, and at once proved to be far more in sympathy with the native idiom. This was the Hellenistic tradition, with its vivid figure drawing, that had remained very much alive in Byzantium and had been adopted in the Frankish Empire. It was seized upon by our artists, particularly by the illuminators, and quickly given a greater vitality and an insular gaiety that found expression in lighter and more brilliant colours. The resulting "Winchester" school of the south was "the first English thing in English art," and deservedly admired.

Although I think that Mr. Kendrick over-

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praises some of it, every judge must admire Winchester art, and above all the qualities of its pen drawing. These are well exemplified here by the delicate accomplishment of the tumbling acrobat, the strength of the eleventh-century Mouth of Hell, and the unexpected tenderness of the Father and Son from a Trinity that was drawn in about the year A.D. 1000.

Outside southern England there is some pleasant work, but nothing of high distinction. One looks most hopefully to the North, where the Northumbrian crosses were one of the glories of the earlier period, but even Mr. Kendrick's eloquent advocacy of the courage that maintained the northern school of sculpture against Viking onslaughts does not make its products of much more than archæological interest. The clumsy late crosses, often curiously combining scenes from pagan and Christian mythology, cannot stand comparison with their predecessors.

The successive Scandinavian styles—Jellinge, Ringerike, Urnes—of the Danish and Norse settlers have left a few interesting monuments, and they gave something to the Anglo-Saxon artists, but nothing was created that has either the vigour or the grace that these styles attained in their northern homelands.

In England as a whole the tangled strands of Celtic, Saxon, German, Carolingian, Byzantine and Scandinavian elements in late Anglo-Saxon art make a cultural design at least as complicated and hard to unravel as their own interlace and animal patterns. There is no doubt, however, that the mixture had results that were often remarkable and, in the Winchester school, magnificent. Mr. Kendrick believes that the art of the illuminators for a little survived the Norman Conquest, while, ironically enough, the Bayeaux tapestry, that record of Norman victory, was worked by English needlewomen. But before long the weight of the new Anglo-Norman Romanesque overwhelmed the earlier and more sensitive tradition.

Many of us will enjoy trying to disagree with Mr. Kendrick's æsthetic judgements, while, as is inevitable with important pioneer work, experts will question some of his minor historical opinions. But we, the English (not for once that non-descript modern race, the British) must be grateful for this inspiring survey of our ancestral art. We treat this with our customary negligence, but it is an achievement of which we might well be proud. JACQUETTA HAWKES

A T.B. RECORD

No Longer Wings to Fly. By JAMES KINROSS. *Hamish Hamilton.* 9s. 6d.

After the war books, the cold-war books; sky men sitting perched on painters' cradles or running coffee-stalls; the major of tanks measuring insurance claims; the bus-conductor, with memories of the desert, carrying on a kindly armed resistance against middle-class wives; and from prison camps the solitary terror or disposition, an entanglement with Shakespeare, a new Bridge system, a black-market technique, a plan for underground car-parks, marriage bureaus, and re-establishing the Empire.

Less of a free agent than any, Captain James Kinross found himself in 1945 exchanging four years of Oflag for two in hospital: T.B. of the left lung. He had been captured with the Commandos in Norway, and his ambition, when illness overtook him, was not merely to get well, but to return to service. He was by nature (one deduces) staid, active, courageous and not a little self-satisfied; the ingrown need for attack made him a resolute but nervy patient. At first (complaint of the virtuous) he could scarcely believe that the thing had happened to *him*; he jibbed and got worse; his case was nattily mapped out; then to the prospect of a frightening operation was added the silted dread of years. He hesitated, wobbled, accepted the operation and recovered. His book imparts, with a cool, sensitive patience, his two years' experience of disease.

Like polio or cancer, T.B. imposes its own dangers, epochs, sympathies, delusions, and paraphernalia of cure. For the victim or initiate, black legend dissolves away in a clinical white, a vocabulary both expert and casual: X-ray, A.P., chart, fluid, refill, the phrenic crush and the p.p., the thora; but with this last, terror has come full circle. Capt. Kinross was blown up and let down, pricked, tapped, and drained, all in anticipation (though at first he didn't realise it) of the dreaded thora. This operation (thoracoplasty) comprised three operations, under local anaesthetics and taking altogether eight hours, during which sections of the ribs are broken off and removed. Capt. Kinross was aware of a good deal, though he felt little pain. The description of this ordeal, of the fantasies leading up to it and its accompanying and ensuing states of mind and body, gives the book an energy one may not expect of it; for the writing, though everywhere neat, is not insistent. Nor, since his adventures on the slab are treated in such detail, does he provide a complementary picture of the surgery involved. It is quite easy to read through this account and still not know the pros and cons, the how and why, of a thora. Since one purpose of the book is to reassure patients who may have to undergo the operation, this seems a pity.

Still, *No Longer Wings To Fly* has been delivered out of a certain necessity: its weaknesses—witness the title, the displayed photograph, and some passages of naive or smug reflection—ensure a fair degree of honesty. Had the author been a little more on guard, he might have written considerably less well. G. W. STONIER

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

Symphony. SIBELIUS: No. 7, C major (Hallé/Barbirolli. C3895–7). A disappointing performance, efficiently recorded. One is not used to associate low vitality with Sir John Barbirolli, but such is the impression left by this set. The string tone is poor and the orchestra playing as a whole has neither the weight nor the brilliance required by this predominantly tragic but powerful and fortifying symphony. The wonderful Koussevitzky set (in Vol. I of the Sibelius Society), being recorded in a concert hall, still sounds astonishingly fine.

Concertos. BRAHMS: Double Concerto A minor, Op 102 (Kulenkampf/Mainardi Suisse Romande/Schuricht. AK2025–8). This melodious and beautifully written concerto—Brahms's last orchestral work—seems rather unlucky. The earliest set, by Thibaud and Casals, left little to be desired in its day; but the Heifetz/Feuermann issue, though magnificently played, was ruined by the worst kind of American recording. The new set has little to recommend it, for the soloists do not seem to be at all at ease either with the music or with each other. The tempi are cautious to a degree, and although the orchestral part is sensibly played, the recording does not make the best of it. DVORAK: Cello Concerto, B minor, Op 104 (Fournier/Philharmonia/Kubelik. DB6887–91). After careful comparison, and somewhat to my surprise, I am driven to the conclusion that Pierre Fournier has succeeded in surpassing Casals in this concerto. His interpretation is considerably less passionate than Casals', who seems to play with a sword rather than a bow; but the unbroken nobility of M. Fournier's line, the calm grandeur of his conception, the subtlety of his phrasing, and the consistent warmth of his tone, together create a new standard. The orchestral playing matches that of the soloist, and the recording is admirably balanced. Indeed a wonderful set. BACH: Violin Concerto, A minor (Tibor Varga/Philharmonia/Bernard. DX1586–7). A plangent tenderness is the salient feature of this violinist's playing, and by means of it he makes a very beautiful thing of the Andante, with its long legato sentences. In the outlying movements his style is no less good, although above treble G his tone becomes slightly nasal (a recording fault?). All in all this is an outstanding set, for the tone of the string ensemble is unusually sweet and the harpsichord continuo (played here by Geraint Jones, but not included in the Menuhin set) provides a welcome tonal variety in the background.

Miscellaneous Orchestral. RAVEL: *Daphnis et Chloé*, Suite No. 2 (Radiodiffusion Française/Kletzki. LX1215–6). Apart from one patch of nasty tone at the end of side 1, this is an excellent record: the performance does justice to one of the most lovely sound-tissues ever devised. The Decca set, however, still maintains its superiority to any other. CORELLI: *Suite for Strings* (Philadelphia/Ormandy. LX1214). Mr. Ormandy's inveterate romanticism plays havoc with this kind of music, making it sound like a clumsy pastiche. The recording is harsh and metallic. SUPPÉ: *Light Cavalry*—Overture (Boston Prom/Fiedler. C3904). A most brilliant, happy affair in every way. The recording deals very successfully with the "open air" score. Now the best record of this winning piece. BRAHMS: *Variations on a Theme by Haydn* (Vienna Phil. /Furtwängler. DB6932–4). After feeling obliged to dismiss so many of Dr. Furtwängler's recent issues, on the score of eccentricity and exaggeration, it is pleasant to be able to welcome this one almost unreservedly. My

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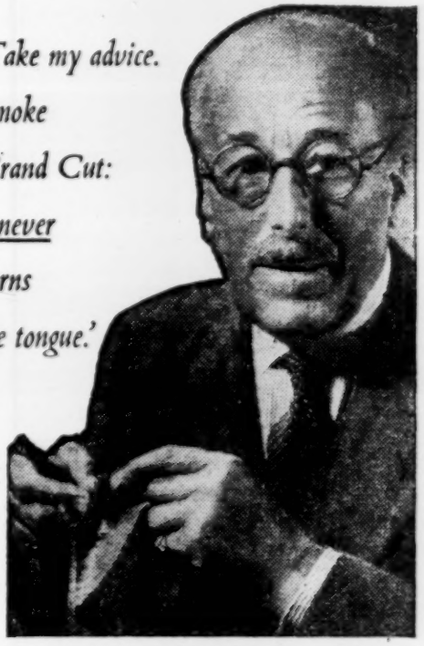

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only grumble concerns the lovely *gracioso* variation, which is taken very slowly and allowed to go to sleep. Otherwise this is a splendid performance, rich in tone and beautifully recorded. The fill-up—Nos. 2 and 3 of the *Hungarian Dances*—is equally well played. DELIUS: *On Hearing the First Cuckoo in Spring* (RPO/Beecham. DB6923). Long expected, this disc proved a slight disappointment. When we first hear the bird he ought surely to be in the depths of the wood, not—as here—bang on our windowsill! Of course there is much to enjoy in the perfect management of rhythm and texture; and the recording is excellent. But somehow the poetry has escaped. IRELAND: *The Forgotten Rite* (Hallé/Barbirolli. C3894). An early work (but none the worse for that), *The Forgotten Rite* is an agreeable exercise in the mysterious. In style it is not unlike Bax, but commendably briefer, and firmer in outline. The performance seems a good one and the recording is well-managed.

Chamber Music and Piano. MOZART: *Duo in No. 1 G major* for Violin and Viola (Goldberg/Riddle. R20576–7). Mozart's two Duos (the second is in B flat) are miracles of technique—as well as sparkling and tender music. Never for a moment does the writing appear top-heavy. In this new issue the G major Duo is executed with skill and assurance; but it is all rather loud and close to the ear. Many readers may prefer the old Grinke-Forbes set (Decca), which includes both Duos on three discs: they are played with greater intimacy of feeling and a more continuously pleasing tone, though the surfaces are rather heavy. BRAHMS: *Piano Quartet, G minor*, Op 25 (Serkin/Busch Qt. LX1217–21). A deeply serious and dignified performance. The players make rather heavy weather of the Intermezzo. Brahms is seldom graceful, especially in his early works, and when he is, advantage should be taken of the fact. Altogether I miss the fire and elegance of the old Rubinstein/Pro Arte set. But the Busch Quartet is distinguished for its style and this recording can be recommended. CHOPIN: *Fantaisie, F Minor*, Op 49; *Nocturne, C sharp minor*, Op 27, No. 1 (Malcuzynski. LX1211–2). Unlike most of Chopin, the *Fantaisie*, with its march rhythms and its thick harmony, needs delicate handling. Solomon's record (down for deletion) is exemplary; Malcuzynski's, though well enough recorded, is less than adequate, for the performance is emphatic and unimaginative. The *Nocturne*, however, is finely played. CHOPIN: *Ballade No. 4, F minor* (Monique de La Bruchollerie DB6791). A most unfortunate issue. The later works of Chopin should (it is safe to say) never be made occasions for the display of bravura. Mlle de La Bruchollerie is a remarkable technician, but her conception of this *Ballade* is at fault, and the result of her "brilliance" is a hopeless lack of cohesion. The piano tone, moreover, is particularly nasty. Solomon again preferred.

Vocal. STRAUSS: *Ariadne auf Naxos*—"Es gibt ein Reich" (Cebotari/Vienna Phil. DB 6914). There is a special pathos in the fact that this record should have turned out to be the last we shall ever hear of Maria Cebotari. The quality of this artist's voice was always beautiful, but in recent years it had declined markedly in steadiness—a fault which is, however, entirely to seek in this lovely record. Mme Cebotari sings Ariadne's monologue with wonderful expressiveness; the orchestral balance and the recording are both excellent. LAMBERT: *The Rio Grande* (Kyla Greenbaum/Gladys Ripley/Philharmonia/Lambert. DX1591-2). This piece has worn well. The period flavour charms, because Mr. Lambert's touch is light; and the picturesque beauty of the central section has not faded. Recalling the age of the first issue of this work, I can add with relief that the performance and recording are most successful. PUCCINI: *Manon Lescaut*—"Donna non vidi mai"; MASCAGNI: *Cavalleria Rusticana—Siciliana* (Jussy Björling/Orch/Grevillius. DA1908). Not one of M. Björling's most pleasing records. In both arias his voice sounds over-loud, charmless, strained. GIORDANO *Andrea Chenier*—"Nemico della patria"; PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda*—"Pescator, affonda l'esca" (Gianpiero Malaspina. DX1589). Although I cannot pretend to care for Signor Malaspina's all-in style, I will admit that he manages these arias most efficiently. "Nemico della patria" never fails to score a hit in the theatre, but on a disc it seems formless and musically uninteresting. The aria from *La Gioconda* loses less. The recording is rather violent. MOZART: *Don Giovanni*—"Mi tradi" (Elizabeth Schwarzkopf/Philharmonia/Krips. LX1210). This fine scena needed a separate recording, but I regret to opine that Miss Schwarzkopf does not, on this occasion, fill the bill. In the softer passages her singing is always agreeable; but when a larger volume and a more dramatic delivery are needed, the shortcomings of her voice and style become sadly apparent. CILEA: *Adriana Lecouvreur*—"Troppo, signori"; PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda*—"Suicidio!" (Joan Hammond/Philharmonia/Süsskind and Braithwaite. C3901). This seems to me one of the best records Miss Hammond has ever made. The aria from *Adriana Lecouvreur* (usually known, by the way, as "Io sono l'umile ancella") has real individuality and Miss Hammond sings it with suitable gentleness. In "Suicidio" we are treated to some of the singer's less agreeable tones; but the conception is dramatic enough and the recording admirable. SCHUBERT: *Im Frühling* and *Ganymed* (Bruce Boyce/Moore. C3900). Brave attempts which do not quite come off. Mr. Boyce has a good voice and is a most intelligent musician; but his singing has a certain gruffness about it which is ill suited to the more refined type of Lied. This record should, however, be bought, for *Ganymed* is a very remarkable song and it is interesting to compare it with Wolf's so different (and on the whole more imaginative) setting. PICK: *Wiener*

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